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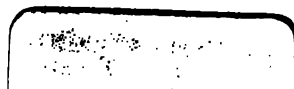
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THE
RETROSPECT.

BEING

An Enquiry into the Fulfilment of Prophecy

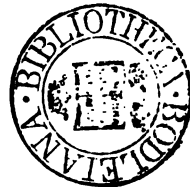
DURING THE LAST TWENTY YEARS;

AND ALSO

**HOW FAR THE CHURCH IS THEREBY FURNISHED WITH
ANY GOOD GROUNDS FOR EXPECTING**

THE INSTANT COMING OF THE LORD.

VOL. III.



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THE RETROSPECT.

No. XI.

AND wherefore into the wilderness? Let us see.

We have already stated in our preceding number the grounds which exist for the expectation, that this symbolic woman who flies into the wilderness, and whose future history in that state we shall now endeavour to discover, is the Church left on the earth, after the living saints are translated into their glorified condition, at the first appearance of the Lord in the air.

It is scarcely possible to conceive a more appropriate symbol could be selected to describe the helpless and forlorn condition of the Church, under such circumstances, than that of a woman lying exhausted after the birth of a child. Such events as the appearance of Christ and the change of the saints, *professedly* expected by so few within the borders of the visible Church, and *actually* longed and looked for by still fewer,

must have the effect (apart from all considerations of the manifestation of God's judgments), of destroying, as in a moment, all those false dependencies upon which the Church has been accustomed to rest, and thus the way will be prepared for her complete dissolution as an ecclesiastical polity; nor can much doubt be entertained, if a strong consolation was not administered to her in that moment of agony and trial, that her spiritual life would altogether become extinct. The ultimate hope, which we have reason to believe is declared in the prophecy, will, however, be eagerly grasped at in her extremity, though the shock which she will have received will render a period of rest needful, in order that she may gradually recruit her strength, and be brought into the condition of confronting in open conflict that serpent, from whose face, at first, she is represented as flying into the wilderness as a place of refuge.

This symbolic action of the woman is described in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation in two several places: the first, in the fifth and sixth verses; and the second, in the thirteenth and following verses. We shall quote both passages in the consecutive order in which they occur in the prophecy:—"And she brought forth a man child who was (about) to rule all nations with a rod of

iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne. And the woman fled (or was a flying) into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred, and three-score days"—or, literally, three years and a half (Rev. xii. 5, 6).

“ And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time (or, literally, three years and a half), from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

These two passages in the prophecy, which describe the history of the woman immediately after the birth of the man child, and during a

literal period of three years and a half, are rich in symbolic representation, and we think their true interpretation will conduct us to a much wider field of enquiry than their apparent simplicity would at first lead us to anticipate; for, we think it will appear in the sequel that we are thereby furnished, not only with a clue to the ministerial aspect of the Church during her sojourn in the wilderness, but also to the nature of her employment there, and the end and object of her seclusion from the world for such a period of time.

The first symbol which presents itself to our consideration is that of the great eagle with two wings, who is represented in the figure as bearing the woman into the wilderness; and which of itself is so comprehensive that we think it advisable, in order to render our future interpretation more intelligible, to contemplate the emblem in the two separate and distinct aspects—firstly, its symbolical signification; and, secondly, its typical import.

But, as all the symbols in the Apocalypse are selected from the Jewish ecclesiastical economy, it is quite evident we can only acquire light as to the true meaning of this symbol by discovering its proper place in that dispensation; and, if possible, in a similar way ascertain also its true typical character as applicable to the Church of

Christ; for, we presume, it will scarcely be necessary to insist upon the principle laid down by Saint Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, that the entire Jewish ritual, with all its laws and ceremonies, infolded within its outward forms the more advanced and spiritual dispensation which was to follow.

Though the eagle, as a metaphorical figure, is frequently used in the Old Testament Scriptures, yet it is only discoverable as interwoven directly with any part of the Jewish dispensation in those cherubim which the prophet Ezekiel saw come in a whirlwind out of the north: and he declares that one of the four faces in the head of each of the cherubim was that of an eagle.

Commentators disagree among themselves as to whether the cherubim mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures are identically one and the same in every case; and it must be confessed that, if the letter of the Scripture be somewhat obscure upon this point, sufficient light has not hitherto been vouchsafed the Church by the teaching of the Holy Spirit to clear up the entire mystery contained under these Jewish symbols. One thing, however, appears to be very evident—namely, that whilst the cherubim which Moses was commanded to make and to place at the two ends of the mercy seat had only one face, each

of the cherubim seen by Ezekiel had four. A slight attention to the instructions given to Moses, as recorded in Exodus xxv. 20, affords us indubitable evidence, that each cherub attached to the mercy seat could have had only one face, and not four: because the faces of these two cherubim looked one to another, as well as down upon the mercy seat, which obviously could not have been the case had they four faces each—that is, assuming the fact, of which there cannot be any doubt, that the four faces looked four different ways from the head of each cherub.

It is quite apparent also, that when contemplated with a view to a comparison, the cherubim overlooking the mercy seat, and the cherubim seen by Ezekiel coming out of the north, are numerically different; as in the former case there were decidedly only two, whilst in the latter there were four cherubim.

These two important points of dissimilarity are quite sufficient to justify the conclusion that these cherubim are not identically one and the same; but, on the contrary, that they are distinct and separate, and were intended by divine wisdom symbolically to signify, if not altogether different, yet diverse mysteries of truth in the spiritual Church, and doubtless also in the age to come.

It is not, however, our purpose on the present

occasion, to enter upon the enquiry to what particular forms of spiritual truth they severally point, as we shall find ourselves in a better condition for the prosecution of such an investigation after having given a full interpretation of those four eras of three years and a half each, which, when united, we suppose will compose the last fourteen years of the Gentile dispensation. At present our researches must be restricted to an examination into the typical import of the eagle's face, as exhibited upon each of the four cherubim, as recorded in the first chapter of the prophet Ezekiel.

Before, however, preceding with our subject, it is most essential to observe that these four cherubim seen by Ezekiel had not four heads, but only one head with four faces; and the importance of establishing this fact will become more evident as our interpretation is developed.

The first question which presents itself for solution is—what do these cherubim symbolize? To which we reply, in general terms, that they are typical of the Christian Church. And we rest such a conclusion upon the fact that the four living creatures (misinterpreted in our translation by the word “beast”), mentioned in the vision given to St. John, and recorded in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Apocalypse, are said to sing

a new song on the occasion of the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailing to open the seven sealed book, as follows—"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. v. 9, 10). In this song it is quite evident that the symbol of the living creatures is abandoned, so that those who are thereby symbolized appear in their true character, which is, as men redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and, therefore, can signify none other than the spiritual Church of Christ.

We are enabled to identify these four living creatures seen by the apostle John with the living creatures presented by the prophet Ezekiel, not only because they correspond numerically in both visions, but also because their general appearance is similar; accordingly as it is written, "and the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle" (Rev. iv. 7). It is true that, in some respects, the description of the four living creatures in the Revelation varies from those seen by the prophet Ezekiel; but it will appear

upon examination that it is in the way of enlargement and addition, which, doubtless, will be found to have their peculiar meaning; but, inasmuch as they appear to correspond in their chief features, we may safely conclude that they are identically one and the same. And though this is not the proper place for an enquiry into the signification of such differences, it may yet be as well to observe that it is reasonable to expect, and quite in accordance with the analogy of divine revelation to suppose, that later prophets should have vouchsafed them fuller developments of the same truth, which may have been only partially given to their predecessors in the prophetic office.

We conclude, therefore, for the reasons already stated, that these living creatures, as recorded in the fifth chapter of the book of the Revelation, are identical with those seen by the prophet Ezekiel, and that, generally, they represent the body of those men who are redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb; and that, consequently, they signify the Christian Church, of whom alone it can be said, in the essential meaning of the term, that they are redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Now, if the whole body of the cherubim symbolize the Christian Church, then the faces must

signify the ministries of the Church ; simply, because the face is a part of the head, which invariably stands in Scripture, as well as by the universal consent of mankind, as the place of dignity and rule : and if we take the head itself to signify Christ as the only Head of His Church, then we must conclude that the four faces are intended to emblemize a fourfold aspect, through which Christ, as the Head, looks forth upon the Church and, through her, upon the world.

Assuming, therefore, that these four faces in the cherubim denote four distinct and separate aspects through which Christ, as the Head, looks out upon the Church and the world through His ministries, we are driven to the conclusion that the faces themselves must carry upon their front some palpable and unmistakeable indications of their respective character ; and, upon such a supposition, we shall now proceed to ascertain what peculiar ministry in the Church the face of an eagle portrays ; which, if we can satisfactorily determine, will be found materially to assist us in forming a correct opinion of the ministerial aspect of the Church, during her sojourn in the symbolic wilderness for three years and a half, immediately consequent upon the appearance of Christ in the air and the translation of the living saints.

No interpreter can possibly make any satisfactory progress in the exposition of a symbolic prophecy, without making himself first acquainted with the nature and character of the symbol itself. But, independently and apart from all considerations of the expedient observance of this sound principle of interpretation, in the present instance there is no other alternative than that of extracting the truth from the symbol itself; because, as far as we have been able to ascertain, the Scriptures are wholly silent as to the emblematical and typical import of these faces upon the heads of the cherubim.

The eagle, or indeed any of the fowls of the air, when used as a symbol, without any reference to its peculiar characteristics, naturally draws the attention to the air or heavens; and, when applied to any distinct ministry in the Church, suggests the idea of its being of a more purely spiritual character than others whose border is supposed to be more limited to the bounds of the earth. But if the reader will refer to that admirable work, "Cruden's Concordance," under the head "eagle," he will find a succinct account of the natural history and peculiar instincts of that bird, of which it will be scarcely necessary to observe that he is classed by common consent as the head of the feathered tribe; just as all the other

faces in the cherubim are heads of *their* respective tribes: thus, the lion stands as head of the untamed beasts of the forest, the ox or calf as the head of all tame and domesticated animals, and the man as head of all the intelligent and visible creation.

In order to attach proper weight to Cruden's account of this bird, it must be recollected that his description is not so much derived, either from the records of natural history or personal knowledge as from the testimony of Scripture; and, therefore, his observations are the more valuable when any spiritual truths are sought to be extracted from his representation of the true character of the symbol.

The eagle soars highest of all the fowls of the air, and loves to build its nest on the tops of the rocks, accordingly as it is written in Job (xxxix. 27, 30)—“Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh her prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she.” It is said that she has not only a quicker sight, but that she is the only one among the feathered tribe who can gaze upon the meridian sun in all its splendour with

an open and unflinching eye. The eagle shuns the company of other birds and soars alone, or rests in solitary exclusiveness upon the tops of the highest rocks. She does not always devour the flesh of her victims, but oftentimes leaves the half-consumed carcase for birds of an inferior note, whilst she herself breaks the bones of her prey, and devours the marrow which they contain. She not only shuns the company of other birds, but the presence of man is so obnoxious to her that Cruden records that "it goeth forth to prey about noon, when men have gone home out of the fields."

Now, what is that ministry of God towards man, which, moving highest in the heavenly region, first discerns things from afar, and whose spiritual altitude enables it to detect objects which are not within the range of the eye of ordinary men?—surely the seer or the prophet. What is that ministry, which, by coming in close communion with God in the way of revelation, is most accustomed to look upon God in His spiritual glory?—surely the prophet. Who are those who are keen of eye and quick of scent in the knowledge of God's purposes?—surely the prophet. Who are those who extract the marrow—the spiritual substance from all truth—and leave the dead carcase of the letter,

as it were, to ignobler birds to feed on ?—surely the prophet. Who are those who love to dwell alone, and seek the mountain height or the solitary places of the wilderness, shunning the common haunts of man, and holding sweet converse with God alone, and yet never less alone ?—surely the prophet. And who, when he descends to the general society of his fellow men, is avoided by most and regarded with suspicion by all ?—surely the prophet.

To cite examples in justification of this interpretation of the symbol, would be to point to every prophet whose history and habits are recorded in either the Old or New Testament Scriptures. If the mountains, and the solitary rocks, and the desolate wilderness of that land of prophets, indeed, had tongues to tell the tale, we would appeal to them as witnesses in corroboration of its truth. Was there a recess in all the land which echoed not back the lonely tread, and witnessed not the silent eloquence and deep communion of heart, which the Son of God Himself held with His Father who was in heaven ? It may be that such notions may expose us to the suspicion of possessing a heated and frenzied brain ; still we cannot refrain from the expression of a feeling, that, if the Church inclosed within her bosom a few more such soli-

taries, there would not be a fibre in the body that would not respond to the action of that spiritual life, which alas ! is too often extinguished among the busy haunts of men.

Ye who are spell-bound to outward ordinances, and imagine God can be found only in one place, remember that it is not recorded of Him who came to fulfil the law, and who was the Ordinance-giver, and the Ordinance-keeper, that He was ever found in the temple praying, though He was daily in the temple, and the temple was the proper place in which a Jew should offer up prayer: but *it is* recorded that He continued hours, and even whole nights, in prayer in the solitary places and mountains about Jerusalem. Nor can we fail to remark, that when Christ sought to teach His disciples truth, He lured them from the common haunts of man, and taught them under the broad canopy of heaven: and we may rest assured that God is still to be found by the mountain side, and along the lonely sea shore, whispering peace and rest to the spirit of man, and lifting up his heart and affections from earth to heaven. But men in these days are too deeply occupied, either in the Church or the world, for much thought and reflection; and, like Martha of old, are so cumbered with much serving, that they have little leisure to devote to

silent meditation, or lofty and heavenly contemplation. But dost thou not feel God in the breeze which sweeps down from yon mountain top? Be ye sure He is there; for He flieth on the wings of the wind. Canst thou not see Him in the broad expansive sky? Behold, He is there also; for the heavens declare His glory, and the firmament showeth His handy-work: He maketh also the clouds His chariot. Canst thou not trace His footsteps in that boundless sea?—He is there also; for His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters. Whither canst thou flee from His presence?—how dreadful is this place! and yet how sweet!—how eloquent, and yet how still!—all nature is hushed in quietude; yet God speaks through all, and points to that eternal and still more perfect age to come, when the Son also Himself shall be subject to the Father, that God, though invisible, may be all in all.

If, then, the face of the eagle upon the head of the cherubim indicates the prophetic office of the Church, we have no alternative than the conclusion that this first of the four eras of three years and a half, in some way or other, assumes a prophetic character. And so we find, in perfect consistency with such an interpretation of the symbol, the Church, at last, broken-hearted,

and disgusted with the world and all its temptations and snares, and which combined have seduced her into such a forgetfulness of her God, flies into the wilderness to weep apart, and pour out her sorrow before God ; and there He will meet with her, and teach her *there* the value of that gift which she has too much despised.

But it is evident, from the text, that great emphasis is laid upon “ the two wings of a great eagle ;” and, if the expression was not intended by the Holy Ghost to attract particular attention to the duplex character of the wings, it is difficult to assign any adequate reason for its use, inasmuch as it is scarcely necessary to notify the fact in the prophecy, that an eagle has two wings, and neither less or more. But it would be very unsound, as well as impious, to imagine that the Holy Ghost even adopted a single word or expression without a specific object in view ; and, though the Church may not be always able to ascertain its true import, yet ought we, nevertheless, to conclude that every word in the sacred writings is pregnant with signification.

Now, if the eagle be a true symbol of the prophetic office in the Church, then her two wings would seem to point to a two-fold form of its manifestation ; and which we think, on further investigation, will prove to be undoubtedly the case.

We have already adverted to this mystery of divine truth in the "Preface" attached to the first volume of this publication, to which we would direct the reader's attention*—wherein we have endeavoured to show that there are two distinct and separate channels in the constituted being of man, through which God severally communicates divine light—the one being that of his spirit, the other that of his mind or intellect; and, moreover, that it is through the first of these two channels alone God communicates His infallible word and will, in the way of direct spiritual inspiration by the Holy Ghost.

There can exist little doubt but that, when contemplated as a part of his whole being, the spirit of man is the highest in order and dignity, because it approaches nearest to the being of God Himself; who, as a pure Spirit, can possess no form or parts, and is altogether out of the conditions of time and place, except as manifested in the person of the Man Christ Jesus. And this truth is made evident by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Phillipians, wherein he declares that the extreme humility and condescension of the second person in the Trinity was plainly exhibited, inasmuch as He (that is Christ Jesus), being in the form of God, and who thought it not

* *Vide* Preface, page 8.

robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation : and how was this act of humility manifested ? We answer, by consenting to take upon Himself the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man. Therefore, it is quite evident the great act of condescension in God was, that the second person in the Trinity, to redeem man, descended from the Godhead, and took upon Himself a human form, by which act He voluntarily became a servant, and in respect of that form (but of that form alone), subjected Himself to the conditions of time and place ; so that, as touching His Godhead, He is equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost ; and moreover that, as the Head of all the creation of God, though all things are subject to Him, both visible and invisible, yet His manhood, nevertheless, cannot be in two places at one and the same time ; whereas God must of necessity be ever equally in all places, and cannot be in one place more than in any other.

... Indeed, were we not apprehensive of digressing too largely from our subject, we could easily show that God, to whose perfection nothing can be added neither aught taken away, must, as of necessity, be ever in all places at one and the same time ; and, moreover, that He would not be

that perfect and omnipresent Being, which we know He is, if He *could be*, as God, in one place more than in any other ; because imperfectibility would be implied in the supposition that aught could by possibility be diminished from any o God's attributes ; for He could not, in degree, be so perfect in that part where He was less, as in that part where He was more present ; so that, as the infinite God, He cannot be susceptible of any mutation, either as to degree, place, or condition. Immutability is one of God's essential attributes ; and, if He were capable of, or subject to change, he could not be God ; because, to be God, He must be the immutable as well as the omnipresent One, and this is the meaning of the Psalmist's inspired declaration :—

“ O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising ; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasses my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I *flee* from thy presence ? If I ascend up into

heaven thou *art* there ; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou *art there*. *If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day : the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*."

Nor is it to be supposed that this doctrine at all interferes with another important, though it may be a subordinate truth—viz., that God manifests this universal presence in His dispensations to man, both as respects occasion and place, more sensibly at one time than another ; inasmuch as such especial manifestation can have reference only to man as a finite creature, and, therefore, within the conditions of time and place, out of which in truth he can have no existence ; and, therefore, such outward and occasional demonstrations of God's more immediate presence are not to be regarded in connection with His own being, but only in relation to His manifestation to the creature. Indeed, God's omnipresence, as of necessity, is as essential an attribute of an infinite being, as limitation, which necessarily involves place and condition, is that of a finite being. An

infinite and insuperable distance must ever exist between God and the creature ; and its vast proportions can only be expressed, and even then, most inadequately, by apparent paradoxes : so that, whilst God can neither be added to, or diminished from—because essentially the Immutable One—the creature, because as essentially mutable, must ever be changing ; and that man is susceptible of transformation constitutes his supreme felicity, because “ we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord ” (2 Cor. iii. 18). But this glorious assimilation to the infinite perfections of God, though it shall ever be progressing in the redeemed through the countless ages of eternity, yet, paradoxical as it may appear, the glorified creature shall ever be at an equal distance from attaining to it—ever growing, yet never full-grown—increasing in perfection, yet never perfected—ever transforming, yet never attaining higher than to a likeness of those incomprehensible, immutable perfections which can alone be found in that Godhead who dwelleth in light inaccessible and full of glory, which no man can approach unto, and whom no man hath seen, or can see.

“ The superiority of spirit over matter, to which

the mind and intellect of man properly appertains, is evident from the fact that the former is essentially immortal, and cannot die ; whereas the latter is mortal, and does die—that is, is susceptible of corruption : and, no doubt, this immortality of life was originally conveyed to Adam, and to us through him, when God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living (immortal) soul” (Gen. ii. 7).

If the pure spirit of man, therefore, constitutes the highest form of his being, we should naturally be led to the conclusion that it would be to and through his spirit, that God would communicate His infallible truth, even were we not taught such a doctrine more directly by the testimony and example of Scripture. But, though the spirit of man, as distinguished from his human intellect, is that part of his whole being which God has selected as most susceptible of the supernatural inspirations of the Holy Ghost, yet that spirit, whilst under such operation, must be kept in a quiescent and passive state, in order that God’s word may flow out from the channel as pure as it came from Him. And it must be quite obvious, if this were not true, that man’s responsibility, as an active and intelligent agent, would be destroyed, which would be quite contrary to

the analogy of all God's dealings with man, whom, having thus constituted, he could not consistently with His own creative wisdom regard in any other light. And, perhaps, there is no condition in which man can possibly be placed, which can demand a stronger effort of his will, than that of keeping his spirit in a condition of perfect quietness and passiveness, when under such extraordinary energizings of the Holy Ghost.

It may appear to some of our readers that this is an extraneous disquisition ; and, moreover, is open to many grave objections, inasmuch as the principle, if admitted, might be made applicable to the inspired canon of truth ; but, whilst we strenuously protest against such an application of our remarks, if only upon the ground that the perfect purity of that canon must be considered by every true believer as established beyond the possibility of doubt, because God has constituted it the only record of His revealed will—yet, we cannot be deterred from the analysis of any truth, simply because it is possible to pervert our true meaning, or misconceive its tendency. We merely contend that those upon whom the gift of prophecy is conferred are responsible agents, and, if responsible, then of necessity liable to err ; and if our conceptions of this twelfth chapter of the *Apocalypse* should prove to be cor-

rect, a very short period of time will elapse ere the Church will have much cause to regret her imperfect knowledge of the nature and character of the prophetic gift: and which we suspect she will only be able to acquire through the most painful experience, by being exposed to every form of lying delusion which the serpent shall cast out of his mouth as water, with the hope of carrying the symbolic woman away with the flood,

Assuming, therefore, that the spirit of a man is one form through which the prophetic gift is exercised, and that that form is symbolized by one of the wings of the great eagle, we are naturally led to adopt the conclusion, that the other wing is intended to signify the same gifts conveyed through, and manifested, by the intellect or mind of man in contradistinction to his spirit, and which would exhibit itself in the way of teaching; and though the latter unquestionably, in a certain sense, may be inferior to the former, yet it does not follow, as of necessity, that the one is subordinate to or dependent on the other, though the fulness of the gift unquestionably exists in the union of both: so that, though either may be exercised apart from the other, yet doubtless the fulness of the blessing to the Church consists in the combination of the two,

though not absolutely invested in one and the same person; neither, as of necessity, the converse.

It is quite evident that this two-fold form of prophecy is not only discernible in the Scriptures themselves, but has also been recognised by the Church. Cruden states that the Hebrews originally called the prophets "seers," and afterwards "Nabi," which comes from the root Nibba—that is, to foretell, to divine: and he adds—"The verb Nibba, to prophecy, is of great extent. Sometimes it signifies to foretell what is to come: at other times to be inspired, to speak from God. It is said (Exod. vii. 1) 'Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet'—that is, he shall explain and interpret thy sentiments and commands to Pharaoh and the people."

The above truth is sufficiently apparent in the symbol itself; for the wings are separate and distinct, and their action is independent the one of the other, though the bird can alone be borne aloft in the air by the free exercise of both: and, indeed, this consideration would appear to involve a very important and fundamental principle of truth—namely, whether one form of ministry can exist in the Church without its fellow; and so, consequently, whether one ministry can exist without all? To which question

we think no other reply can be returned than in the affirmative ; for it is quite evident, that if, as of necessity, one ministry is made subordinate to and dependent upon another, they must concentrate themselves eventually somewhere and in some ministry, as a headship upon the earth, which constitutes the essence of the sin in the Papal Antichrist ; for, to deny that any ministry can exist independently of any other, and dependent only on Christ, is to substitute another headship for that of Christ, making a visible headship upon the earth out of Christ ; and if it be contended that this cannot be so, because Christ may be acknowledged as the invisible head of the body, we reply that the Pope of Rome is equally ready to make a similar acknowledgment ; for the sin of the Papal Antichrist does not consist in denying the invisible headship of Christ, but in saying—"I am the sole visible representative of that headship on earth, and you cannot approach God, neither can God approach you, except through and by me." Moreover, we would add, the sin of the personal infidel Antichrist will not consist in denying the headship of Christ as an abstract doctrine of truth, but in saying—"I am he—I am the Christ of God—I am the man of God's right hand, and there is none other."

As Protestants we are unanimous in the opi-

nion that this sin has been already consummated in the Popedom of Rome, and that thereby the Pope is constituted the Papal Antichrist of the Roman earth ; but, we would add, should such a spirit of contention for headship ever arise in our own Church, we may rest assured it will prove to be the first manifestation of the Antichristian leaven ; for its tendency is to destroy the life of God in her members, and create the worst form of dissension within her bosom ; for without doubt the setting up of heads or headships in the Church on the earth, is an Antichrist ; for it virtually denies that Christ is the head of every man ; and, to contend that no light or life can possibly come to any man except as flowing through such head, is virtually to deny that Christ is the dispenser of the Holy Ghost, and the light of the world ; and whilst such a spirit, if it should appear, will inevitably engender fierce disputes and contentions among the ministers of the Church, it will be the sure precursor of her spiritual dissolution as a body.

But it should be remembered that the four cherubim which Ezekiel saw coming out of the north had not *four* heads each, but only *one* head with *four faces*—a point so pregnant with significant meaning that it is almost impossible to insist too strongly upon its importance.

Now, though the word “head” occurs fre-

quently in the Old Testament Scriptures, yet it is invariably used as significant of headship as applicable to nations, armies, tribes, families, &c.; and even in these cases the expressions must be understood in a subordinate sense. But the word never occurs in the New Testament in reference to any minister or ministry in the Church of Christ; nor are we aware that it has transpired at all, excepting in connexion with Christ as the head of the Church, and the man as head of the woman, according as it is written —“ But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God ” (1 Cor. xi. 3). The Lord Himself, indeed, has enforced a solemn warning upon all who yield themselves up to contentious disputes for pre-eminency in His Church; for, on the occasion of the first apostles being betrayed into such a snare, he administered to them one of his severest rebukes, setting a little child in the midst of them, and declaring, he that would be chiefest among them must become as that little child.

But we are not to appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures as explanatory of the word “head,” in order to arrive at its true spiritual signification, but to the New Testament; and we find there that the word is only applied to Christ as

the head of His mystical body, and to the man as the head of the woman ; and, moreover, that in both these cases it conveys one and the same truth. So that whether we regard the emblem in its purely symbolic character as the head of the human body, or in the application of the symbol by the Holy Ghost Himself, as stated in the above passage of Scripture, it obviously signifies, in either case, *per se*, life-container. As respects the symbol itself, it is well known, life can exist in the human body, though divested of even all its members excepting the head, the removal of which produces instant death : thereby proving, beyond all doubt, that the head is the seat of life : and, as respects the application of the symbol itself to Christ as the Head of the Church, and to the man as head of the woman, in the former case it indicates the source of *all spiritual life* ; and, in the latter, that of all *human life*. For these reasons we think the conclusion is justifiable, that the setting up of any pretension to headship in the Christian Church amounts to a claim to self-contained life, which can only exist in the Head, Christ Jesus ; but the perpetration of such a sin in the Church is not to be determined by the critical meaning of a word : for this sin will be found in that spirit which says by its acts—"I am, and there is none

other;" and its first indications will be contentions about dignity and precedence, and its outward appearance, when consummated, will manifest itself in an *exclusive* spirit, as in its grosser form in the papacy; and, as we judge, in a *seclusive* spirit in more enlightened and more spiritual Churches. But it is to be fervently hoped such sin will never be permitted by God to be consummated in the Protestant Churches; but that, should such indications manifest themselves, God will mercifully nip them early in the bud, and thus prevent their growth to maturity, even though it should be by cauterizing that part of the body where the unhealthy symptoms first appear.

To deny the existence of any visible headship on the earth is not equivalent to the denial of the exercise of any legitimate authority in the Church, which may and does exist without headship in the sense in which we understand and have explained the term. Indeed, there would be no order without subordination, and there could be no subordination without authority and rule; but, then, such authority can only be legitimately exercised in *real*, and not merely *professed* subordination, to the great Head Himself; and, where the reverse is the case, it will be found to produce personal arrogance in those

who sit in the place of rule, and engender exclusiveness and sectarianism in the body itself, in its most subtle and deadly form—more dangerous, because such pretensions may exist where nothing flagrantly and palpably false in doctrine may be taught, which would act as a beacon to warn the unwary traveller. Nor is it necessary for any minister or ministry in the Church to say, in so many words, “I am the head,” in order to consummate such a sin; for we should expect it would rather manifest itself in the denial that Christ, who is the Head of every man, and the Head of the Church, can, by possibility, reach any member of His mystical body, excepting by and through that particular ministry.

A general is supreme in command over the army; but if he were to deny the right of the sovereign to communicate directly with any of his subordinate officers, without making him the medium of communication, though that might be the *ordinary* course for such communication, he would become a rebel to his king by setting up an independent headship for himself, and would thereby forfeit his royal master's favour, and expose himself to all the penalties of an open act of rebellion. It is true the subordinate, should he desire to appeal to the king, may not

approach him save through his general, who, by holding his sovereign's authority, is the king's representative to him ; but the converse is not true, that, because the subordinate may not appeal to the supreme authority save through the intermediate officers, that, therefore, the king himself has no right to give directions to the meanest man in the whole army, except through the same intermediate channel : and though it is true that no member of Christ's body has any right to pass by either the ministers or the outward ordinances in the Church, or either in spirit or by act to feel independent or separate from either, yet it is equally true that Christ, as the Head of every man, and especially as the Head of the Church, may, when and how He pleases, manifest His own sovereign will as seemeth good to Himself, either mediately or immediately—directly or indirectly—dependently or independently of either or all the ordinary channels of communication ; to deny which is to deny the sovereign headship of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Church, and virtually to say that there is another Head than Him visible upon this earth, which is an Antichrist.

Regarding, therefore, the symbol of the eagle with her two wings as significant of the prophetic character of the Church, we conclude

that it will be during the period of three years and a half, when she is supposed in the figure to be resident in the wilderness, that she will receive the outpouring of that spirit of prophecy which is resident in Christ as the Head—as that great Prophet which should come into the world; or, to express ourselves in language appropriate to the original emblem as seen in the cherubim, Christ, as the Head, will look upon the Church, during that period, through the face of an eagle, being one of the four faces which the prophet Ezekiel describes he saw on the head of each cherub.

This interpretation is in perfect accordance with God's previous development of the prophetic office; for though we are informed (1 Cor. xii. 28) that apostles are first in dignity, yet they are not first in order of manifestation; which is made quite apparent by the fact that the dispensation to the Jewish nation, which was the first dispensation to man in a Church form, and addressed to any congregated body of men, was essentially prophetic—that is, God constituted and established the Jewish ecclesiastical polity by and through the ministry of prophets alone, to whom relatively all other ministries were consequently subordinate. This truth must be quite evident, not only from the history of

Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness, but is also confirmed in the subsequent history of the nation after their establishment in the land of Judea ; so that we conclude the Jewish economy was essentially a dispensation of prophets. In like manner, it is reasonable to imagine, upon the breaking up of all the present forms of ecclesiastical government, after the Church is brought out of her present Egyptian and fleshly condition, which our interpretation supposes will be the case on the occasion of the first appearance of Christ in the air and the translation of the saints, that the first series of actions, having for their object the Church's reconstitution, should also assume a prophetical character, prefigured (as we shall have occasion to show, when pursuing our enquiries as to the typical character of this portion of the prophecy) in the selection of the choicest and most valuable jewels of gold and silver, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, for the purpose of erecting a tabernacle for the worship of God.

Indeed, if it be admitted, as is universally the case in all Christendom, that the Christian Church is an apostolic Church, then it follows as a corollary that though the prophetical office is first in order of manifestation, yet that it is in-

ferior to the apostolic in dignity, inasmuch as all God's dispensations to man are progressive in their development, and consequently that which is last in order of manifestation must of necessity be highest in rank, as well as more comprehensive in character and power ; so that, whilst the apostolic office may include the prophetic, it cannot with equal truth be maintained that the prophetic can include the apostolic, because the lesser is supposed to merge into the greater ; and that this is a fundamental principle of Christian doctrine, and not an attempt to make a distinction without a difference, is plainly manifested in the fact, that the first apostles are in no instance termed " prophets " in the New Testament, though, in truth, they were all prophets as well as apostles ; by which we infer that apostleship was the more distinguished title of the two. We conclude, therefore, whilst the prophetic office was manifested in the fulness of its character in the Jewish dispensation, that the spiritual Christian Church alone developed the apostolic, and which could, therefore, only be contained in the Mosaic economy in a typical form.

Let us now contemplate another action in this prophecy, as contained in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, and which is represented as being

contemporaneous with the woman's flight into the symbolic wilderness.

And when the dragon saw that he was "cast into the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child* : and to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."

It is quite evident, from the whole character of the prophecy in this twelfth chapter, that "the wilderness" must be taken in a symbolic sense ; and ascertaining its true import from the forty years' sojourn of the children of Israel in the wilderness, after they came up out of Egypt, and before their entrance into the Holy Land, the figure would signify a complete seclusion from all interruption from the world in the prosecution of their ecclesiastical objects—the world being prefigured by the other nations by whom the Jewish people were then surrounded ; and that, as a Church, she should, for the space of three years and a half, possess quiet and rest from all outward persecution or interference, rendered so needful to her from the low and exhausted con-

dition into which she had been brought by the shock supposed to be sustained in bringing forth the man child : or, in other words, to allow her space to recover from the paralysing effects of the discovery, that, whilst the waiting saints of God have been taken away from the evil to come, she herself is left on the earth to encounter all the horrors of the great day of God Almighty.

Such a seclusion from all worldly interruption may be produced by different causes ; and that which presents itself to us as the most probable is, the general terror and confusion which will simultaneously seize all the nations of Christendom, when the fact of the translation of the saints is placed beyond a doubt, and accompanied, moreover, by a continual succession of the most appalling judgments in famines, pestilences, and wars. The Church left on the earth will be allowed for a time to pursue, without molestation, her own career, because the universal disorder which will prevail will at first absorb all men's attention : nor will it be until they are become more familiarized with the horrors of that day, and exasperated and roused to madness by the impenitent hardness of their own hearts, that they will be prepared to vent their malice against the Church of God at a later period of that great and terrible day of the Lord.

But though the Church, during this space of three years and a half, will be protected from all outward persecution, yet she will not be exempt from more spiritual forms of evil: for the serpent, that old dragon, the devil and Satan, has his malignant eye upon her, and proceeds in his rage to cast out of his mouth water as a flood, in hopes of carrying her away in the torrent.

There is not any portion of the prophecies in this book which has met with such concurrent interpretations from all commentators as the symbolic representation now under consideration. They all agree that the combined figure signifies that false doctrine with which Satan has from time to time endeavoured to impregnate the Church; though, at the same time, various applications of this interpretation have been made by different writers on prophecy, when they have sought to discover its specific place in the history of the Church.

As the discussion of former theories of interpretation is not our object, we will not stay to enquire to which we give the preference, when this prophecy is contemplated in reference to any of its primary fulfilments; but, on the principle already laid down—viz., that nearly all, if not all, the prophecies in the Apocalypse have a future fulfilment during the great day of the

Lord—we will proceed at once to ascertain what particular phenomenon this symbol points to in connexion with the *prophetical sojourn* of the woman in the wilderness; and, in doing so, we shall adopt the fundamental truth contained in the interpretation laid down by all previous commentators—viz., that the water out of the mouth of the serpent signifies some form or other of demoniacal delusion and lies.

But, as it is generally admitted that the future fulfilment of the apocalyptic prophecies during the infidel period will be of a more literal character than any that have preceded, we must, to be consistent with such a principle, give to this prophecy a more significant and tangible interpretation than has hitherto been assigned to it by former commentators.

There can be no difficulty in this respect; for, referring to Rev. xvi. 13, 14, we find it there distinctly stated that the spirits of devils, like frogs, shall proceed out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; and we contend it is not interpretation, but only an appropriate application of a plain declaration of Scripture, to point to this era in the history of the Church as exhibiting the *first* demonstration of this infernal procession; and which is represented as occurring on the occasion of the flight of the woman

into the wilderness, which is immediately consequent upon the birth of the man child, or the translation of the saints, and is therefore the first of the four periods of three years and a half each.

The prophecy contained in this twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse had already informed us that the great dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, would be cast out of heaven when that conflict occurred in that region between Michael and himself ; and we have assigned, as we judge, good reasons for the belief that the immediate occasion of that contest was the birth of the symbolic man child. And the figure in the prophecy now under consideration furnishes us with the particular character of the first manifestation of Satan's wrath against the woman who brought forth the man child immediately consequent upon his expulsion from heaven.

The critical propriety of this deduction, thus derived from a combination of these several passages in the prophecy, becomes obvious, when viewed in connexion with our interpretation of the prophetic character which we suppose the Church will assume during this first of the four periods of three years and a half each ; for it is precisely the form of spiritual trial and temptation to which, it is reasonable to imagine, she would be exposed when under the influence of prophetic power—the well

appointed trial, artfully and skilfully adapted to the condition of the tempted—and eminently calculated to carry away the whole Church in the torrent of demoniacal possessions with which Satan shall then seek to deluge her.

It is scarcely possible to imagine a scene of more fearful peril and emergency; and our astonishment must be, that the Church is *not* carried away in such a flood of spiritual uncleanness, especially when her enfeebled condition is taken into consideration, and the utter absence of all restraining power in the Church by the paralysis of all rule and authority, for a time prostrated by the shock she will have just sustained.

The right use of all spiritual gifts, and especially that of prophecy, from their intrinsically elating character, demands the constant exercise of an unusually sober and chastened spirit—an even-balanced and well-disciplined mind, deeply instructed in all divine truth, and well experienced in the deceitfulness of the human heart. This truth is taught us in the history of the Church at Corinth. But what a scene will that day present to contemplation! A disordered and shattered Church without restraint, coveting earnestly all kinds of spiritual gifts, but especially that of prophecy—all eager to receive, but few,

if any, qualified to use—all rushing to obtain, but all equally inexperienced in possession.

A more awfully perilous condition of the Church is scarcely conceivable than that we have just described: men rushing eagerly to acquire supernatural gifts whose spirits have been crushed, and whose minds have been previously enervated and unsettled—and, doubtless, in many cases even altogether unseated—their hearts unprepared and uninstructed, and all their spiritual energies prostrated by the startling supernatural events which had just occurred, to the reality of which they had only been recently awakened to the consciousness of as from a dream. And whilst such a state of things in the Church furnishes us with an awful illustration of the truth of the principle already contended for—viz., that many may prophecy in the name of the Lord whom the Lord hath not sent, and may thereby be even deceiving themselves and deluding others: it supplies us also with irrefragable evidence that the discernment of a good or evil spirit speaking in prophecy is not such an easy matter as might at first sight appear, because the imposition of the one for the other implies a very close and undeniable, and will, no doubt, prove generally a very indistinguishable resemblance between the two.

This sudden transition of the Church then left on the earth from a fleshly into a spiritual condition, accompanied by such an influx of demoniacal spiritual delusions, will constitute her truly appalling danger at that crisis in her history ; and at first it may fully be expected that the same confusion and disorder which prevailed in the Corinthian Church, who were so replete with spiritual gifts, will occur again in the Church in those days ; aggravated by the delusions of that legion of lying spirits who proceed out of the mouth of the serpent, and who will be allowed for a time to work their will in the distracted bosom of the Church, being without the wholesome controul of that apostolic rule and discipline which, no doubt, eventually checked the disorders of the Church at Corinth.

It is impossible that such a state of things could continue for any length of time ; and, to adopt the language of the symbol, the woman must inevitably be carried away of the flood, if God did not in His mercy interfere for her preservation ; which is described in the prophecy figuratively as the earth helping the woman by swallowing up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

We adopt, fundamentally, the exposition of previous commentators in our interpretation of

this symbol, and explain it as significant of the helping hand of the constituted and fixed authority, which, in the figure, is supposed to be extended to the Church in her emergency, of which the stable earth is a very apt and appropriate emblem.

Bringing, therefore, this principle to bear upon the future fulfilment of the prophecy, we should say, it is intended to intimate that the Church, distracted, divided, and driven to her wits' end by such accumulating perplexities and dangers, would at length appeal to the civil government to issue its mandates for her reorganization, with the hope of her ultimate restoration to order, by the exercise and controul of ecclesiastical authority and discipline: to which appeal the supreme authority is represented as yielding, expressed in the prophecy by the earth helping the woman; and the exercise of this judicious restraint ultimately proves successful, in the subjugation of this form of evil in the Church; inasmuch as it is not only distinctly stated in the prophecy, that the water, which was cast out of the mouth of the serpent is swallowed up, but we learn the same fact also from the seventeenth verse, wherein we are informed that the dragon then changes the character of his machinations against the woman; and, instead of endeavouring to destroy her, by

mingling his own impure flood with the waters of God's Holy Spirit, becomes wroth with her, and makes open "war with the remnant of her seed," which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony "of Jesus Christ."

And here we cannot refrain from pointing the reader's attention to one of God's awful acts of retributive justice. There certainly does still exist in the Church a form of authority and rule; but it is a form only, without its power—excepting, indeed, as exhibited in the possession of patronage, and the distribution of the emoluments of the Church to its many eager claimants. The fact is too glaring to require argument, and we have only to appeal to the observation and experience of every man in support of the truth of our assertion, that, as respects true spiritual discipline and rule in the Church, there is absolutely none; and, moreover, that the slightest indication of its exercise, except by an appeal to the civil power, would be treated with unmitigated scorn and contempt. It would be inexpedient to allude more particularly to the open manifestations of such a spirit in the Church as exhibited within the last few years: the fact is indubitable, that men will not submit to any rule but that of their own creation, or which is exercised in accordance with their own notions of right and

wrong. But, during that period there will arise such a fearful confusion and disorder in the Church, in the absence of lawful authority, that men, as with one voice, shall cry for the imposition of spiritual rule and restraint as the choicest boon of heaven.

For, the blessings of rule can only be duly appreciated by those who have experienced and have emerged out of a previous condition of anarchy. The action of this truth upon the French nation was the secret operating cause which facilitated the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte to the supreme power. Men had tried the figment of self-government, and practically found, though they did not openly avow it, that it was a delusion of Satan—a light borrowed from the lowest depths of hell. Man is so obtuse to the reception of truth that God is compelled to teach him its maxims by painful experiences, engraven upon his heart and life; and the history of man, ever since his creation, is but a painful record of such practical lessons. At the period of the history of Europe to which we refer, the French people had become weary of those miseries which they had created for themselves by the destruction of all restraining power; and they gladly availed themselves of the first opportunity of acting upon the trite political maxim, that the

tyranny of the few is better than that of the many.

Rule and restraint, and consequently subordination, are absolutely necessary for the well-being and happiness of man, and arise out of the essential constitution of his being ; so that, though all rule and government is no doubt practically liable to abuse, and may exercise itself in acts of oppression, yet mankind have ever found their happiness most consulted by even a submission to its exactions, rather than in a resistance of its authority ; and that without any reference whatever to the unequivocal declaration of God's written word, upon the duty of obedience to all lawfully constituted authorities.

This is not merely an abstract theological maxim of truth, any more than it is a political axiom, but arises out of an eternal principle interwoven with every fibre of man's existence as a creature dependent upon God, and the happiness and blessedness of every creature hangs absolutely upon its inviolable preservation : because, as all blessedness must flow from God to the creature, he can only be made partaker of that ever flowing stream by being connected with the Creator ; and he can only become so by consenting to take the subordinate place assigned him in the divine economy.

Nothing can have a being out of God ; and the whole of creation is divided into only two classes—the redeemed and the unredeemed—the one resting *in* God ; and the other existing *out* of God : though both classes are, nevertheless, equally sustained by God. And the only reason that can be adduced for the blessedness of the one, and the absolute and irrecoverable wretchedness of the other, is discoverable in the fact that the *one* portion of creation is eternally *in* God, whilst the other portion is eternally *out* of God.

It follows from these premises that the great sin, as well as the sole cause of the misery of the damned, consists in the act of refusing to have God to reign over them. We know this to be the case with all the fallen spiritual creation from the records of holy writ, wherein we learn that pride was the snare and condemnation of the devil, and that the apostate angels kept not their first principality, but left their own habitation, because they abode not in the truth ; and the everlasting hopelessness of the condition of all the lost thus becomes an absolute necessity ; inasmuch as their being found alien from God was their own act, and has been, in a degree, determined by themselves. And though God, with whom all things are possible, could, no doubt, by a sovereign act

of His power eventually reinstate them ; yet, as there is not the slightest intimation in Scripture of the existence of such a purpose in the divine counsels, we are left no other alternative than the conclusion that their condition, being once fixed, is eternally fixed.

Could men be brought to contemplate truth in its purely spiritual bearing, apart from all considerations of time and place, out of the present condition of things, and with reference solely to the spiritual and eternal world, there can exist little doubt, had man his own choice, that, instead of grasping at power, he would select the place of the ruled rather than that of the ruler ; for the deep responsibilities which the possession of authority involves, whether in the Church or out of the Church, would deter most men from seeking its onerous proprietary. Nor is there a greater proof of the truth of this remark than that which is derivable from the fact, that in all God's dispensations of judgment, either to churches or nations, He addresses Himself to the rulers, and holds them primarily accountable for the sins which those under their rule and authority have committed against His name ; and though the ruled may suffer with the rulers in all such visitations of God, it is only subordinately, and in all cases of extreme judgment, from

their less elevated position, they actually suffer less in their infliction. But so utterly unconscious have men become as to the true nature of authority, that the common expression to denote its character signifies the very reverse of the truth; for men speak of its legitimate exercise to *suppress* and *put down*; whereas the power is conferred by God to *sustain* and *lift up*. It would be well and wise in all our rulers, both spiritual and temporal, and especially those who say in their hearts—We shall not see death, neither shall we go down to hades, neither will the desolating scourge come nigh unto us—to remember those awful words spoken by the Holy Ghost, and recorded by the prophet Isaiah, applicable to those days when the Lord Himself shall arise up in mount Perazim :—

“ Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem : because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us : for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation : he that believeth shall not make

haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only *to* understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that *a man* can stretch himself *on it*; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it*. For the Lord shall rise up as *in* mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Now, therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined, upon the whole earth."

APPENDIX.

If our readers will turn to the first number of this publication, they will find at page 65 a conviction recorded, that God would not bring His final judgments upon the earth without affording His Church a more specific warning of their approach than had hitherto been given; and we rested such an opinion upon the analogy of all God's dealings with man in the way of judgment ever since the creation of the world: so that if that day comes (as assuredly it will come), as a gin and snare upon all the inhabitants of the earth, it will not be because they have not been sufficiently warned, but because they have turned a deaf ear to that warning voice.

We presume our readers are now become sufficiently acquainted with the general features of our interpretation to perceive that, as respects the larger portion of Papal Christendom, we do not conceive the warning will be sent *them* until *after* the appearance of Christ in the air, signified by the actions of the three symbolic angels, as recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the Apocalypse: and which preaching of the Gospel, we think, we have shown good grounds for the expectation will occur immediately consequent upon that glorious event.

The above premises conduct us to two very important conclusions—the one, that it is reasonable to expect the notification of Christ's actual appearance in the air would be almost exclusively confined to that portion of Christendom to whom the immediate hope had been

originally revealed ; and the other, that such portion of the Catholic body would first be made to feel the beginning of sorrows—those labour pangs which the symbolic woman of the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse is represented as undergoing previously to the birth of the man child : the first throes of which become thereby the sure and certain pledge of his almost instant birth.

The general note of preparation has been sounded in Great Britain for nearly a quarter of a century, and the midnight cry of the Lord's actual appearance is now going throughout the Church ; and God is accompanying that cry with such manifest demonstrations of visible judgment as must leave her, if unheeded, wholly without excuse ; for she cannot plead ignorance, or contend that she has been taken by surprise.

As a nation, Great Britain has now acknowledged, by a solemn fast, that God's hand is upon her in judgment ; and, moreover, that that judgment has been brought upon the land in punishment for her national iniquities.

If we take a retrospective view of the events which have happened in this country, during the last quarter of a century, we think there will appear good grounds for the conclusion, that God's warning voice of approaching judgment has extended over a period of exactly twenty-one years—the same number of years which, we imagine, the great day of God itself will occupy. It was about the commencement of the sixth vial, A.D. 1822, that the Church's attention was first drawn, with any decided effect, to the imminency of the final judgments of God ; though, doubtless, many writers on prophecy, as well as individuals in the Church, had some glimmerings of light upon the subject before that period. But it was not until the year 1825-6, that those predictions took a definite form ; at which period, the ministers of the Church

were emboldened to attach a more specific signification to their warnings; and it was, moreover, at that period that the first publication issued from the press whose trumpet note gave forth to the people no uncertain sound. It was in the year 1825-6, that God's first warning was given to this nation in that terrible shaking of the commercial prosperity of the land, in which it is universally acknowledged her true strength consists, and which was regarded by the writers on prophecy at that time—and the record still exists—as God's seal to those truths which had only till then reached the Church in word. Since then a second warning has been given the nation in the visitation of the Asiatic cholera, and an ample interval allowed between each warning for repentance and the turning of men's hearts to God. And we are only adopting the commentary of a high dignitary in the Church, publicly declared in a sermon preached upon the occasion of the recent fast, when we compare this *second* infliction of judgment upon the land to the *first* announcement of impending destruction by the mouth of the prophet Jonah to the Ninevites; and which, in both cases, it was contended, had produced only a temporary repentance and departure from iniquity, and consequently only a suspension of the final stroke in either instance. Unlike the Ninevites, who had only the word of the prophet, we have had two separate and distinct notifications of coming judgments: not in word only, but in very deed and act; and yet, if we are to credit the presence of God's judgments, now in the midst of us, their acknowledgment by the proclamation of a national fast, and the unanimous commentaries of all God's ordained ministers in the Church, the nation at large, though space has been allowed for her repentance, is still mad upon her idols. We are bringing no accu-

sations—we only adopt the language and sentiments of those who sit in Moses' seat—who, as with one voice, testify that the nation has forgotten God, and are given up to selfishness and covetousness—every man seeking his own idols for himself. Two warnings have been given and disregarded; and the third!—ah! the third!—who can divine its end? The first warning note was sounded 1825-6; and the reality, as we judge, began 1846-7—being an interval of exactly twenty-one years: and, if our system of interpretation be true, another period of twenty-one years—the day of fulfilment—will bring us to 1867-8, which is the termination of the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five years of Daniel's prophecy, when the time for blessedness will have arrived.

We scarcely know which to point to with most solemnity—the period of suspense which intervenes between the first act of judgment and the actual appearance of the Lord, that interval in which we now write; or, to the awfully unequivocal character of those judgments which are obviously absorbing the thoughts of every reflecting man, at the same moment that they are attracting the attention of the rest of the world. For, contemplating those terrible calamities as they are every day developing themselves, and viewing them also in connexion with the more fearful evils of which they are the inevitable precursors, both in the natural and political world, scarcely a ray of hope is admissible—that it is possible to suggest any practicable remedies which can even mitigate the future evils with which we are threatened. Nor are we able to resist the conviction, that the unrelenting severity of their infliction is a merciful dispensation of Divine Wisdom, to forbid the indulgence of the slightest expectation that any human effort or device can possibly avert such accumulating

evils, for the purpose of directing the Church's attention to their true import, and thus prevent the encouragement of false hopes as to their eventual removal in the ordinary course of affairs.

Undefined acknowledgments of national sin are often readily made, when an attempt at their more particular definition would be most strenuously resisted, if not absolutely resented. The personal and, therefore, only serviceable application of truth is too frequently lost in loose generalities. But were we asked to point to our great national sin, and which sinks all other offences into comparative insignificance, we should express our conviction, whether in reference to us as a Church or a nation, it would be found to consist in our having received, with coldness and indifference, if not with scorn and contempt, the great hope of the world, and turned a deaf ear to that "rest" which God, in His wisdom and mercy, has provided for the whole creation.

Is there a man in the land who has not, in some form or other, within the last five and twenty years, heard of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? And yet how few, comparatively, even profess to believe the report; and, alas! how still fewer are in the attitude of awaiting His appearing. So general, and indeed so familiar, has the knowledge of such an expectation become, that men of the world, as they are termed—that is, Christian men, who live in constant neglect or violation of their baptismal obligations—commonly use that hope and rest as an expressive and convenient figure of speech, when, as writers, they want to round a period, add piquancy to a sarcasm, or clothe a jest or sneer, with more than ordinary ridicule and contempt.

Were it possible, without interruption, to propound the question in some of our grave assemblies, that the

present judgments which we may now assume are freely acknowledged by all, are but the precursors of the appearance of the great Judge Himself, and that no earthly power can possibly avert the impending calamities until the King of kings Himself shall appear to take the government of the nations upon His own shoulders, it is scarcely necessary to say, its reception would be that of general ridicule. The longsuffering and forbearance of God, so far from being duly estimated, is converted into an argument, that He does not now concern himself in the affairs of man.

If the Scriptures did not expressly declare the fact, we must, nevertheless, conclude that God's forbearance and longsuffering mercy must have a termination at some period or other; since it is evident that the converse of such a faith would make the holy God an encourager of wickedness, by a formal exoneration of man from its eventual penalties. Moreover, if the supposition were admissible, that mere general acknowledgments of God's judgments, though even attended with outward religious observances, were *always* available to divert the righteous judgments of God, then it would follow that that final infliction of God's wrath upon the nations of Christendom, which is predicted in Scripture as the precursors and accompaniments of the appearance of Christ, would never occur; and, consequently, the Lord himself would never come: inasmuch as it is against a people, who still possess the form of godliness without its power, that those judgments are especially directed—a people who draw near Him with their mouth and honour Him with their lips, whilst their hearts are removed far from Him, and their fear toward Him is taught by the precept of man. Nor is this difficulty adequately solved upon the supposition that there are, doubtless, *some* in the nation

who do humble themselves before God, and whose contrition God may accept; because it is not a question of individual, but of national, repentance. Nor must we fail to profit by the lesson which the history of the world records for our instruction, upon whom its ends are come—that when God's judgments are openly manifested, either upon a church or nation, there likewise invariably commences the process of sealing up the impenitent in judicial blindness—a hardening of men's hearts against God's hand, which every succeeding stroke of judgment will render more irreclaimable, until, exasperated by chastisements resisted, and thus rendered callous, instead of being chastened and humbled, they break out ultimately into acts of open rebellion and war against God, declaring that they will not have His Anointed One to reign over them. But “he that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy” (Prov. xxix. 1). Doubtless, individual judgments will also accompany national inflictions, and which it is reasonable to suppose would, at first, be most sensibly felt in the true Church of God; but that man views such personal visitations with a very unspiritual eye who cannot discern in them the hand of his loving Father, who, by such means, would loosen every bond which ties His own children to the world, that in that day when Christ snatches His saints from the world, as a thief, no earthly tie may hinder their flight into that region of spiritual glory where the translated saints shall be assembled.

We do not say these things to add to the general gloom, or to diminish any hopes which some may entertain of eventual deliverance from the present heavy calamities in the ordinary course of affairs—God forbid; but feeling fully persuaded in our own minds that these are

but the commencement of sorrows—the first labour pangs of creation—we should not, as interpreters of prophecy, be dealing faithfully with our readers, if we did not express our firm conviction, as derived from the prophetic word of God, that it is the beginning of that darkest hour before the dawn of that day when Christ, as the Sun of Righteousness, shall arise in meridian splendour with healing in His wings, and gladden the whole of the creation of God by His glorious presence; when these calamities of a moment shall have passed away for ever.

But truly men have spoken of God, as though He had neither eyes, or ears, and held no thunderbolts; or peradventure they supposed that He had gone upon a long journey and would not return again. But though men may have succeeded in banishing God from their thoughts, God has not banished men from His. Nor is He very far away; and we suspect the spirit which has induced men thus to trample on God's honour and think little of His name, is about to be changed from indifference and contempt, into a cry of bitter lamentation and woe. And how will God answer those men who would not have Him to reign over them? In what language will he address those who have met the hope of Christ's coming, the renovation of the world, and the regeneration of all things with a smile of scorn? Hear His first stern answer, in the helpless deathcry of Ireland's famished hosts, and see it in her hospitals, crowded with pestilent horrors—see it in the perplexities of your counsellors, the bewilderment and confusion of your legislators, who know not which way to turn or whose device to follow; whilst selfish individualism—the crying sin of the day—is banding together to protect private interests from the general wreck.

But all this is as the sullen and ominous moanings heard in the disturbed atmosphere, the sure harbinger, however, of the coming whirlwind and the storm—it is as the gentle murmurings of the brook, when compared with the rushing torrent of God's wrath—it is but as the whisper of that mighty voice which will shortly be heard thundering in the heavens, and strike terror into the hearts of kings, and paralyse the vaunted energy of our men of might.

But still the people ask a sign; and God speaketh to them by a sign; and by one that every man can see, and hear, and feel. See it, ye blind, in the gathering gloom upon every man's brow—hear it, ye deaf, in the desponding tones of every man's voice—feel it, ye selfish, in the dark foreboding of your own hearts, whose evil surmisings ye can neither silence or resist, and which importunately testify to approaching calamity! And if you fly to your guides and your comforters, their daily records reflect the same sad tale, and breathe little consolation or hope of future weal. O Israel! Where is now Ashtaroth thy God? Dagon is fallen, and has neither head or hands! Thy merchandise is spoiled, and the things which thy soul lusted after are departing from thee. How is the gold become dim—how is the most fine gold changed? Where are thy wise and prudent men, O Tyre! Where are thy cunning craftsmen? Can they avert the dazzling lightning in its course, and direct its forked arrows into the bowels of the earth? Have their boasted wisdom taught them that feat of skill? Can they divert His thunderbolts—divest them of their terrors, and render them harmless? Has science revealed that knowledge? Can they shield you from the gaze of Him who sitteth enthroned in majesty and power in the heavens? No: but man can still

reason ; and can even extract, with consummate skill, fond hopes that eventual good will yet arise out of present evil. Vain thought !—fatal delusion ! They know not that the nation has been weighed in the balance, and is found wanting ; and that God hath given the kingdom to the true Cyrus, who will yield Him its honour and glory ! “ MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN,” is also written upon thy walls ; and thou, with all thy pride, shall be brought down to the dust, and rise no more at all. The avenger is at thy gates, and the sound of thy mirth, and the noise of the viols and tabrets in thy feasts, shall shortly be heard no more in thee for ever.

24th March 1847.

THE RETROSPECT.

No. XII.

HAVING endeavoured to ascertain somewhat of the spiritual character of the Church, when in her wilderness condition, from the symbols as contained in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, we will now proceed to enquire if any light is cast upon her career in any typical history to which those symbols may be supposed to point.

It must be quite evident that the first difficulty we have to encounter in the pursuit of such an enquiry is, that of satisfactorily establishing any authentic connection between the supposed type and antitype, in the absence of any direct divine revelations upon which we may authoritatively rest. But this embarrassment will be considerably alleviated, if we discover that there is only *one* typical history to which the symbol can possibly refer ; and if it be, moreover, evi-

dent that all the combined emblems are presented to us in that instance, we think little doubt can reasonably be entertained but that the various symbols, thus found blended together in the Apocalypse, were selected by God for the express purpose of directing the attention of the Church to that particular portion of the history of the Jewish people where such a combination is found; and that it was intended to intimate that that history enclosed, in an outward form, the future spiritual career of the Church of Christ in the latter days.

It will scarcely be necessary to enter into any justification of the legitimacy of applying typically the career of the Jewish nation, both ecclesiastically and historically, to that of the more spiritual dispensation which was to follow. The fact of such a typical analogy existing between the two is not only plainly declared in every line of St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews (addressed to the Jews, because they were reasonably supposed to be the better able to appreciate such a truth); and discernible, more or less, in all the writings of the New Testament; but the application has also been acknowledged by the universal consent of the Christian Church, who have intuitively clothed most of their spiritual aspirations in language

borrowed from the whole of the Jewish economy, as well as admitted the truth in a more formal manner.

St. Jerome says, speaking of the book of Leviticus, “*In hoc libro singula pene syllaba celestia spirat sacramenta*” (Ep. ad Paulinem)—“almost every syllable in this book breathes a spiritual sacrament.” Perhaps the worthy father would have been nearer the mark if he had used the word *truth* instead of *sacrament*. But this quotation is quite sufficient to prove the early Church acknowledged that the whole of the Mosaic law was, in fact, a grand symbol which contained, in its outward forms, not merely the indefinite shadow of good things to come, but moreover that its minutest enactments enclosed, and was intended to express, some particular spiritual truth in the dispensation which was to follow, though it is quite evident the Church is now almost in total darkness as to their true import. But if our appreciation of the Mosaic ritual be just, a time is close at hand, if it has not already begun, when every leaf embroidered upon the coverings of the tabernacle and every board in the sanctuary, as well as every observance in the Levitical law, will prove to have its specific meaning in the spiritual Church of God: to which testimony of St. Jerome, we might add that of Bishop

Horseley, who says that "The law was but the Gospel in hieroglyphics."

If the principle, therefore, of such a typical reference be thus sanctioned in the Scriptures themselves, and its truth admitted by the universal Church, it will only be incumbent on us to establish the validity of the grounds on which we rest any interpretation of the future career of the Church, in the previous history of the Jewish nation, in order to find ourselves fairly launched upon our enquiry ; and we think this will not prove a difficult task, when the combined symbols themselves are attentively examined with such an object in view—more especially as the danger arising from a mere human selection of the type is wholly removed by the circumstance that such an analogy, between the type and the antitype, is only discoverable blended with any distinctness upon one occasion, and, consequently, no other alternative is left than determining *that* to be the one thus typically referred to.

We have already had occasion to observe that the history of the woman, after the birth of the man child—that is, the Church left on the earth after the appearing of the Lord, and the translation of the saints—is the main object of the prophecy, as contained in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse ; so that, in order to arrive

at that portion of the history of the Jewish people, to which these symbols are supposed typically to point, we must attentively consider the combined emblems by which this particular transaction is expressed; and we find the prophecy presents to us two prominent figures—the wilderness, into which the woman flies for protection from the face of the serpent, immediately after giving birth to the man child; and the great eagle, with her two wings, wherewith she flies into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

Now, there are only two places in Scripture where the combined figures of an eagle flying into the wilderness occur; and in both instances they distinctly apply to the coming up of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and their entrance and history in the wilderness; nor are the symbols thus associated used in the divine record in connection with any other historical transaction. The passages referred to are as follows:—

Firstly—“And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bear you on

eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel " (Exodus xix. 3-6). And

Secondly—" For the Lord's portion is *his* people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, *he* instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, *taketh* them, beareth them on her wings; *so* the Lord alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange God with him " (Deut. xxxii. 9-12.)

The figure of an eagle with her wings is, indeed, often found in Scripture; but, where it is not used symbolical of the prophetic office, it is almost invariably expressive of the sustaining and protecting power of God extended towards His people, which it is quite obvious is the spiritual form of that truth, which was manifested in an historical fact, when the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt. It is well worthy of remark that this symbol is used by God in His

opening communication to Moses, when he was called up the mount in the wilderness of Sinai.

We are thus left no other alternative than the conclusion that, if the symbolical representation of this woman's history, as recorded in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, contains any typical reference at all, it *must* allude to that period in the history of the Jewish nation when God separated them from the other nations of the earth, and brought them up from the land of Egypt into the wilderness, to teach them there, in that seclusion, the more perfect way of serving and worshipping Him. We conclude, therefore, that the course becomes perfectly clear for a full investigation of the history of the children of Israel in the wilderness, with a view of extracting from the record those typical truths which are to be found enclosed therein; and we think there is contained in that history a rich treasury of gems, though possibly we may not be able to appropriate to each its proper place, so as to form the perfect Mosaic. We will, however, endeavour to direct the reader's attention to *some* of those which we conceive are most prominent, and where we consider not any doubt can be entertained of their true typical import.

Much truth is often lost, both in types and typical histories, in the endeavour to make them

signify either too much or too little. Though a man may be regarded as a true type, yet it does not follow that every action which is recorded of him is therefore to be considered as typical. Moreover, in typical histories, the character of the transactions themselves are to be regarded, rather than the exact chronological order in which they occur. Nor is it to be supposed, because a type finds a centre in Christ, that therefore its typical character is exhausted, and that there can be no after application of the same type in the history of the Church : on the contrary, the very reverse is implied, inasmuch, as respects Christ and the mystical members of His body, that which is true of the Head must also be true of the individual members ; because the mystery of this union consists in a sympathy of the one with the other—and that, not only in spirit, but in actual experience, as we think is plainly perceivable in the testimony of Scripture, and will also become apparent as our interpretations of the future history of the Church are more fully developed.

One instance, in illustration of our remark, will be sufficient to explain our meaning, and, at the same time, establish the accuracy of the principle we have ventured to lay down. Our Lord, in His discourse to the disciples, as recorded in

the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, expressly states that the manna sent down from heaven, for the sustentation of the children of Israel in the wilderness, was a type of Himself as the true bread of heaven. Indeed, the whole of this beautiful though deep discourse, might be considered as the opening of the spiritual truth signified typically in the manna: and yet, though from the extreme importance of the antitypical fulfilment in the person of our Lord it might naturally be concluded that the type would certainly be exhausted in Him, yet it is quite obvious it was not; inasmuch as He Himself, after His resurrection, refers to the same figure as still having a future antitypical fulfilment; for He promises, in addressing the angel of the Church at Pergamos (and every one that hath an ear through him), that He will give to him that overcometh "to eat of the hidden manna"—the enjoyment of which promise was then, and still is, future; inasmuch as all the encouragements of reward addressed to the seven Churches in Asia are intended for the whole Church until the end of the dispensation, and can only receive accomplishment at the second coming of the Lord. This striking example will be quite sufficient to prove that, though a type finds its centre in Christ (as, indeed, all types of necessity must,

as He is the concentration of all truth), yet we are not thereby to understand that the type is exhausted, and can have no reference to any other event or transaction. We cannot, moreover, have a stronger proof that histories, which may be however obviously intended as typical, are not to be considered as indicative of chronological order, than that which is contained in the history of Pharaoh, who was a very complete, and, perhaps, the most perfect type of the last infidel Antichrist; for he came to his end before the wanderings of the children of Israel were begun in the wilderness; and, if chronological order were insisted on in the whole of this typical history, it is quite evident none of the events which subsequently happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness could have any typical meaning at all, because Pharaoh's overthrow in the Red Sea was the type of the final destruction of the infidel, which is always represented in Scripture as the closing act of the Christian dispensation; and, we need scarcely say, such a conclusion would be contrary to the truth. Moreover, as if to prevent the possibility of the supposition that, as Pharaoh's ruin occurred before the children of Israel entered upon their wilderness condition, therefore, his antitype would meet with his end before the spiritual

Church entered upon its antitypical fulfilment, Amalek appears as another opposer of the people of God, whom we have sufficient authority in Scripture for stating was another type of the last enemy of the Church, thereby indicating that the last infidel would still be in active life when the Church would be in that condition. This subordination, and, as we may say, flexibility of the type to the antitype, grows out of the principle that the Church, throughout all ages and in every form, is the grand manifestation of the truth of God, and that all other things are only its accessories, and used as such for her more complete demonstration.

The reason alleged by God to Pharaoh wherefore He required him to let the people go was, that they might serve Him; and, in contemplating the history of the children of Israel in the wilderness, such a reason naturally suggests the enquiry—how and in what manner God's requisition was complied with?—to which enquiry, we think, only one answer can be given—the raising a tabernacle unto God wherein the nation might worship Him.

Indeed, the giving of the law itself, with all its innumerable ceremonies and appendages, can only be regarded as the accidents of the truth and not its essence—one of the preliminary means

whereby God so modelled the mind and spirit of man that he might be brought into a fit and proper condition for that highest act of the creature—the worship of the true and living God. So that the history of the children of Israel in the wilderness is susceptible only of a two-fold division—the one, the ecclesiastical act accomplished—and the other, a record of the experiences of the Jews, as a nation, which they passed through during the period of their sojourn there.

So important was the rearing of this tabernacle, that it was in the third month after the children of Israel came out of Egypt. Moses received his instructions to commence the work, and which was completed by the first day of the second year (Exod. xi. 17-18); so that, at the expiration of one year, the sanctuary was finished in which God had promised to dwell. We cannot, therefore, much err in the conclusion that the erection of this tabernacle, and the enactment of the various laws and ceremonies which were appended thereto, was the great work which the children of Israel performed in the wilderness.

Proceeding, therefore, in the light which such a discovery casts upon our path, we think we are justified in the conclusion (though the prophecy in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse does not record the fact—neither, indeed, makes any allu-

sion whatever to the actings of this symbolical woman in the wilderness), that her chief occupation, whilst thus secluded from all interference from the surrounding world, is to raise up that tabernacle of living men of which the Mosaic tabernacle was the true type; and that it is, moreover, to this spiritual tabernacle the apostle especially refers, when he declares that it was against this tabernacle the infidel beast, during his continuance of forty and two months, opened his mouth in blasphemy as well as against God, and those who then dwell in heaven (Rev. xiii. 5, 6). We conclude, therefore, without attaching any specific meaning to the expression on the present occasion, that the Church on earth, during this beast's supremacy, is distinguished by that term; and, we think, in the sequel it will appear to have been selected with peculiar appropriateness.

Now, it must be remembered that all the ornamental and imperishable materials used in this tabernacle were brought up by the children of Israel out of Egypt; and, moreover, that they were borrowed of the Egyptian women: and if Egypt, as is generally admitted, be indicative of a fleshly condition, and women are to be taken as symbolical of Churches, then the combined symbol would signify those spiritual gifts and

graces which individuals in the Church would still retain, after the shaking to pieces of all the ecclesiastical establishments, which we conceive will ensue after the appearance of Christ in the air and the translation of the living saints.

It is to be observed, this tabernacle was raised by contributions from all the children of Israel—that is, from every man that would give them willingly with his heart; and the proclamation for such offerings was not given and heard by a portion only of the children of Israel, but by all: so that all who possessed a willing heart for the work might have the privilege of pouring in their offerings into the treasury of the Lord. The universality, therefore, of the proclamation would infer that it is contemporaneous with the actions of the three angels of the fourteenth chapter, who are seen flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel in their hands, even were our attention not directed to the existence of this tabernacle on the earth during the infidel beast's supremacy. From which premises we gather the conclusion, that this tabernacle of living men will constitute in that day the only true spiritual temple of God—not the refuge of a sect, but the true Catholic Church, where men shall offer God acceptable worship, and out of the pale of which there shall be THEN

no salvation or security— a tabernacle, which shall prove to be as a covert from the storm when the blast of the terrible one shall be heard around.

It is to be remarked that, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, nothing living entered into the promised land that came up out of Egypt, and that the only valuables that were carried across the river Jordan were the jewels of gold and silver which were in the tabernacle, or which might have been then in the possession of the children of Israel, by being handed down from father to son. This historical fact would seem to intimate that very few out of the heterogenous mass, who at first come up out of the Egyptian condition of the Church, will survive to be individually partakers of that glorious deliverance which we conceive to be signified by the visible translation into heaven of the two witnesses, at the expiration of the last of the four periods of three years and a half; and which, for reasons already alleged, we consider will be at the termination of the harvest, at the close of the fourteenth year of the seventh vial of wrath.

Many arguments may be advanced in support of such an opinion, independently of those which are derivable from the transaction in the history, when regarded in its typical character.

A mixed multitude came up with the children

of Israel out of the land of Egypt; and, when we contemplate the almost innumerable sections into which the Catholic Church is now divided and subdivided, each of which will, no doubt, furnish its company of willing offerers to build up this spiritual tabernacle—and reflect also upon the prejudice and ignorance which is so prevalent in us all; and, moreover, connect this undeniable fact with the perilous ordeal of temptation and trial which, we believe, the whole Church will then have to encounter—we can scarcely feel surprised at such a conclusion, however painful it may be to our feelings, or contrary to our present expectations of the future.

It must also be remembered that, if this tabernacle of living men, is to be constructed out of the jewels of gold and silver gathered out of the whole of Christendom, and that the proclamation to all those who are willing to offer themselves to aid in its erection, takes place only when the actions of the three angels commence, that a certain interval of time must necessarily elapse before the first announcement of such a purpose and its final completion: and that, therefore, it is quite possible, assuming the first knowledge would transpire in this orthodox kingdom, that those who first rush to offer themselves might not prove to be those ultimately selected for its

accomplishment, as these would necessarily first have to undergo such a severe test of sincerity as might reasonably be supposed to diminish their original number. Besides these considerations, the unparalleled snares and temptations to which the Church will then be exposed will be of such a character as will in themselves almost prove irresistible, and consequently occasion the apostasy of many ; and the persecutions of the infidel Antichrist will also tend to reduce their ranks, though, in truth, such of this last class as do thus fall will be ensured the ultimate reward of their fidelity.

But let us examine if some of the earlier portions of the history of the Jewish nation do not cast some light upon the future career of the Church in her wilderness condition.

The first general impression conveyed by the history is, the murmurings of the children of Israel, because the ordinary resources for the sustentation of human life were not apparently within their immediate reach, accompanied by the expression of longings after the flesh pots of Egypt; by which we understand (Exod. xvi. 3) the outward assurance of their ordinary supplies of food, though enjoyed at the expense of a hard servitude, the continuance of which they saw little prospect of in their isolated position in the wil-

derness. We are assured this trial of their faith in God, was for the purpose of testing whether they would trust God or not, for the common elements of food to sustain natural life. These several trials ended in the sweetening of the waters of Marah, which were bitter; and, ultimately, the miraculous production of a stream of water from the rock, which followed the children of Israel throughout their wanderings; and also in giving them manna from heaven, upon which the host of Israel subsisted during their sojourn in the wilderness.

Now, taking all these things out of the category of things visible, in which sense alone they applied to the children of Israel, the question presents itself—what is their spiritual signification when contemplated as types applicable to the history of the spiritual Church, and especially at that period to which we suppose these events typically point? They appear to us to prefigure that first trial of the Church which she will have to encounter, when all her fleshly dependencies upon visible ordinances are taken away from her by the dissolution of all ecclesiastical establishments, and when she is thereby brought into the condition of resting only upon God for support, without the aid of those ordinary means to which she has been accustomed, and which she has so

much abused by converting into an object of spiritual idolatry.

And here we cannot refrain from remarking, how severe that trial must prove to a Church who has been leaning upon the outward ordinances of religion, rather than upon God Himself. We appeal to the experience of the reader, if any attempt to give the visible ordinances their true subordinate place in the economy of the Church is not regarded almost as blasphemy itself, than which there cannot be a stronger proof of the undue value set upon them. This will prove to be the first needful trial whereby God will break down, as if with one stroke, the fallacious props upon which His Church has been so long resting; whilst at the same time He manifests His own mighty power, as the alone daily Sustainer of all spiritual, as well as natural life; and this is the first great experiment to bring the Church out of all visible reliances, and introduce her into personal communication and dependence upon God alone. For it is the time spoken of by Ezekiel, when the Church shall seek in vain for a vision from the prophet, and when the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients (*Ezek. vii. 26*).

We think, also, there can be little doubt but that the law of worship, as laid down by Moses,

before the tabernacle was fully set up, refers to the same condition of the Church. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shall sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen : in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone : for, if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon" (Exod. xx. 22-26).

It requires very little observation to discern that these and similar instructions, given to the children of Israel at the early stage of their wilderness condition, *before the tabernacle was set up*, were only temporary ; and, though similar in kind and spirit to those which were subsequently more fully developed, yet, at the time, were intended for the guidance of the children of Israel only until the more perfect way of worshipping God was shown to them.

The first attempt at any organization of the

nation was made at the instance of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law (Exod. xviii. 13 *et seq.*), who, perceiving that Moses was attempting in his own person to judge the case of every man, suggested to him the propriety of dividing the host into numerical sections, and appointing over each a judge holding authority from himself as their leader ; but, at the same time, so arranging this delegated rulership that an ultimate appeal to himself was inevitable in all cases which were too hard for the subordinate judges ; and the sole headship of God Himself over His people was kept constantly in view in this proposed arrangement ; inasmuch as that which was too difficult for Moses was to be referred to Jehovah, between whom and the people Moses was the connecting link as mediator. This regulation had two objects in view : the one, the acknowledgment of Moses' authority over the nation as God's representative, and which was preserved in the various gradations of this subordinate rule which was eventually centered in him : and the other, the more ostensible one, of relieving Moses from that burden which otherwise Jethro foresaw would become intolerable.

Now, it is very remarkable that in this comparatively temporary arrangement, until the complete law was given, the qualifications for this

delegated judgeship over tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands, were simply that they should be men who feared God—men of truth—and *hating covetousness* ; which indispensable requirement of the absence of such a vice, not only indicates that these three personal qualifications are hand-maidens one of another, but that hatred of all covetousness would become a *sine qua non* in all who would sit in the place of rule, either in the Church or in the State ; and which truth was set forth in a more enlarged manner, as we shall presently see, in the laws ordained for the priesthood.

These provisional altars, on which the children of Israel were directed to offer up to God their burnt offerings and their peace offerings, were erected with two different materials: the one being composed of the simple earth, which was accessible to the people at all times and in all places ; and the other was built up with rough stones, which were not always at hand, and which it is therefore supposed must be sought after with more diligence and care. But there is this peculiarity in both altars—viz., that they were to be raised in the simplest form and fashion ; so that the stone altar, upon which alone the skill of the craftsmen could be exercised, was considered as polluted if a tool was even

raised upon it, though that might be with the ostensible object of giving an outward comeliness to the altar of God. Little doubt can be entertained as to the particular truth taught the children of Israel in this original regulation as to the worship of God ; for, doubtless, it was intended to teach them, that, as God was about to give them the perfect pattern of a tabernacle wherein He would receive the worship of all His children ; and, moreover, promulgate a code of laws by which their approaches to Him should be regulated, He would not have the hand of man's invention interfere with, and thus mar, the divine workmanship. And whilst the altar of stone is an expressive symbol of public worship, which exclusively belongs to the house of God, the altar of earth is as fitting an emblem of those private acts of adoration which are not necessarily confined to place, occasion, or circumstance ; but which may ever, and at all times, spontaneously arise from the depth of man's heart which, in truth, is the only legitimate fountain of all acts of public worship.

There will be little difficulty in discovering the antitypical fulfilment of this type, when sought for in reference to that first period of the history of the Church after her entrance upon her wilderness condition ; for it expressively teaches,

when the Church thus resembles the disorganized state of the children of Israel when these commands were issued, that she must not make any fleshly attempts to reorganize herself as an ecclesiastical body ; because God Himself is about to give to the true antitype of Moses in the Mount, the perfect pattern of a spiritual tabernacle which He will have His people erect to Him, but in the construction of which the wisdom of man shall have no part at all.

But though the regulations respecting these two altars were only provisional, yet no man was permitted to go up to either by steps, lest his nakedness should be discovered : by which we learn that, even in that early stage of the Church's final reformation, personal holiness will be expected in the worshippers—an earnest of that spotless purity which God will rigorously require at the hands of all, when He sitteth in His temple as a refiner and purifier of silver—purifying the sons of Levi, and purging them, as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

There is, however, an expression in this passage, quoted from Exodus, which it is utterly impossible to pass over ; and which, if we mistake not, affords us a key whereby we may discover the exact time of the antitypical fulfilment of

this opening transaction in the history of the children of Israel:—"And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold."

The end of all God's dispensations to man is, the revelation of Himself—the gradual reduction of that distance which sin has produced between God and the creature, with the view of its eventual annihilation. This truth is perceivable in all God's communications to Moses, and is in no instance more distinctly stated than in the passage now under consideration, where God alludes to His having talked with the children of Israel from heaven. And it is also here worthy of remark, that the preliminary stipulation which God makes with the children of Israel, in return for such an act of grace, is, that they make unto themselves no gods of silver or gold, and which, taking covetousness to be the spiritual form of the sin of outward idolatry, is another mode of expressing the intense hatred God especially entertains against that sin, because it is the germinating root of all others.

Just in proportion as the future unfolds itself to our contemplation, the conviction becomes

more deeply rooted in our minds, that this almost universal sin will become the test of fidelity and love to God, in the final struggle of the Church. Indeed, if the temptation, which all the Scriptures concur in stating, shall come upon all them that dwell upon the earth in the last days be a universal temptation, as is plainly intimated (Rev. iii, 10), it must necessarily appeal to a universal lust at that period generally yielded to; and we know of none so prevalent as the inordinate love of money and power, in the encouragement of which spirit of independency of God, by placing thereby trust in a creature thing, the essence of this sin consists.

Now, if the communications which God held with Moses in the Mount were at all typical of any transactions which were to occur thereafter, we are not aware of any event ever alluded to in Scripture which can adequately answer to the type, excepting that day when Christ shall be resident in the heavens; and though invisible in the cloud, yet surrounded with all the power and glories of God, personally directing, governing, and judging His spiritual Church, then on the earth, through the mediatorship of those glorified saints whom we consider as the true and full antitype of Moses—those risen ones who shall

then have free access into the presence of Christ ; whilst, as Moses did of old, they shall hold communication with men upon the earth, and under whose immediate directions this spiritual tabernacle of God shall yet be reared.

The consistency between the type and supposed antitype is perfect in all its parts ; for the prohibition to the children of Israel to approach or touch the mountain, on which God appeared to Moses, plainly enough indicates the inaccessibility of Christ, then in the heavens, to mortal flesh and blood ; whilst we are far from affirming the exception made in favour of Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, who went up into the mount and did see the God of Israel, and did eat and drink before Him, may not imply also an exception to the general rule in that day, in favour of some one or more ministries which the tabernacle form of worship will doubtless then develop in the Church.* Nor can we fail to remark upon the

* It is more than probable that such a truth was indicated in the scene of the transfiguration ; and that that glorious vision was intended to prefigure not only the Millennial glory of Christ and His Church, but also the eternal age, when God shall be ALL IN ALL ; which latter appears to have been signified in the audible voice of the invisible Father, expressive of that personal and close communion which the invisible Godhead will hold in the eternal age with every member of Christ's mystical body,

striking coincidence, that the circumstance of Moses's face shining so brightly, in consequence of coming into such close personal communication with the God of glory, as to render it necessary for him to veil his countenance before the children of Israel, points with sufficient significance to the glorified bodies of the risen saints, which will need a covering to shield their transcendent glory from the eyes of men in mortal flesh.

even as with their Head Himself. There can be no doubt but that the presence of Moses in the mount of transfiguration typified those saints who shall be raised from the dead to the enjoyment of the Millennial glory; whilst Elijah, who was translated into heaven without seeing death, was the type of those who shall be alive and remain until the coming of the Lord; and who shall from that state be changed from mortality into immortality, as in the twinkling of an eye; so that Christ, transfigured on the mount, and attended by Moses and Elijah was, as the text informs us, a full and correct representation visibly to the three disciples of the kingdom of God; and their presence there on that occasion would then signify that men, in the future age, sustained by the Holy Ghost, should be able to look upon God and live; and also hold personal intercourse with the glorified saints. The suggestion of the apostle to build there three tabernacles seems to justify such an interpretation of the vision, and to point to the Jewish, Spiritual, and Millennial dispensations, all of which will ultimately merge into the eternal age, though no doubt eternally preserving their distinctive marks and peculiarities. "*There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead*" (1 Cor. xv. 41, 42).

The terror which the congregation of the Israelites manifested at the presence of Jehovah is plainly indicative of the painful consciousness which the Church of Christ will have acquired of her fleshly condition, and thus unfitted for the presence of God—a conviction superinduced by the acknowledged fact, that those left on the earth, after the translation of the saints, were not considered worthy to escape those things which were coming on the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man; but that it was needful for *their* purification they should be left behind, to pass through the fiery ordeal of the last judgments—that “hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,” in order that their dross may be purged from them, in that seven times heated furnace.

The long sojourn of Moses in the Mount—the impatience of the people, ending in the open manifestation of that secret idolatry which was in their hearts, inducing Aaron, the priest, in the absence of the ruling power, to make them a golden calf to worship—the intercession of Moses with God in their behalf, and yet his subsequent anger when he descended from the Mount—his dashing to pieces the tables of stone on which the decalogue was written—his grinding the calf

of gold to powder and strewing it upon water, and then compelling the Israelites to drink it—his calling together the sons of Levi, and their infliction of the subsequent judgments, are all circumstances full of typical import, when applied to the history of the spiritual Church after her deliverance from her fleshly condition, and when she first commences her residence in the symbolic wilderness.

The absence of all restraining power in the Church, where so much confusion must necessarily exist, when the fact is made apparent that the Lord Himself has descended from the right hand of God and is resident in the clouds of heaven—made manifest, even, if by no other supernatural sign than the sudden translation of the saints—must develop all those various forms of spiritual evil, which now lie concealed within her bosom. And it is very conceivable that, in reckless impatience at any delay in the expected aid, the people may urge on the unshielded ministries in the Church to make a molten calf of that gold which was designed to build the true tabernacle of God: so that when the glorified saints descend from the cloud of glory—the presence-chamber of the King Himself—with instructions and power to set the distracted Church in order, they may find some fleshly attempts to direct the worship

of the Church, and to reconstitute her by the invention of man, which it may be needful to grind to powder ; and the proclamation for those " who are on the Lord's side " to arrange themselves under their banner, would prove the first necessary step to distinguish between those who feared the Lord, and those who feared Him not. Nor is the sword of judgment put into the hands of the sons of Levi without its appropriate signification ; for it would appear to indicate that the first act of these glorified saints, whom we consider to be the true antitype to Moses, would be that of investing such of the ministries as still cleaved in spirit to the Lord with power to purge the Church of the worshippers of the golden calf, by cutting them wholly off from the service of God.

The breaking to pieces the first tables of stone, on which the decalogue was written, seems to us to indicate the utter absence in the Church of that spirit of love to God and man, which our Lord Himself declared was the spiritual essence of the written law ; whilst the preservation of the second tables, containing the same laws, points to the determination of God still to have this holy and spiritual law of love, the standard of His Church's attainment ; and the inexorable requirements of the Mosaic laws, at the hands of

the children of Israel, would then signify the same truth which we have extracted from other portions of the Apocalypse, and which we shall see still more reasons to confirm, that, in that period of the history of the Church to which our interpretation applies, perfect love and an unconditional abandonment of all for God shall alone be acceptable in that day, or prove effectual safeguards against the wiles of Satan, put forth through the triple confederacy of evil of the last times. This interpretation is in perfect accordance with the type; for it was Aaron, the high priest, who stood, in his relative position to Moses, as the type of the subordinate ministries in the Church, who lent himself to this act of wickedness, and which was developed in consequence of the impatience of the children of Israel, at the prolonged absence of Moses whilst he was receiving his instructions at the mouth of God.

Now, it must be remembered that the covenant entered into by God with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai was not a *new* covenant, but the confirmation and advanced development of an old one, which God had entered into with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So the erection of this spiritual tabernacle in the future wilderness condition of the Church, after the appearance of

the Lord in the air, is not to be regarded as a new constitution given to the spiritual Church, but as the effectual carrying out, in her actual experience, those principles of truth which would have been fully developed at the commencement of her career, had not her own unfaithfulness frustrated God's intentions of mercy and grace, and thus, as it were, nipped the blossom in the bud—seething the kid in its mother's milk.

But God will not thus ever be disappointed in His Church. He expects to see the image of Christ stamped upon her members and reflecting His likeness, and **HE WILL HAVE IT**. The statute law of the Church of Christ is **LOVE**, and the cherubim shall yet be seen coming out of the north—the cold death of nature—enfolded in fire like amber, though carried in the whirlwind of the conflicting elements. Yea: Christ will yet see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied: the vine will yet bud forth and blossom and bear its fruit, though God prune it down to the root: the Church shall yet yield her spiritual fruit to God, though it may possibly be through a bloody ordeal, and wrung from her through the tortures and death of the flesh.

The inexorable character given to the angel in the pillar of cloud—the unflinching sternness of the law itself, with all its uncompromising exac-

tions—and the severity of the judgments inflicted on the children of Israel for their violation—all show forth, in type, the rigorous requirements of spotless holiness in heart and life, which will be exacted at the hands of the Church in that day; for, in truth, *none* of these things were fully carried out in the literal history of the children of Israel; and, therefore, we are obliged to find a place for their fulfilment in that period of the history of the spiritual Church, when all the past experiences of the Jewish people, as well as the Christian Church, will assuredly have at once their final concentration and accomplishment.

The command to destroy utterly all the idolatrous nations in the land of Canaan, lest, by the children of Israel's mingling with them, they should corrupt the pure worship of God, foreshadows that period in the Church's experience when Christ Himself shall appear for her purification; when any indulgence of life in the flesh shall prove to be the utter death of the spiritual life in man; and, when keeping back part of the price, and thus lying to the Holy Ghost by mocking God with anything short of a whole burnt offering, shall be visited, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, with instant judgment: so that, then, even the smell of the flesh shall not be endured upon the garments of the children of God.

It is scarcely necessary to enlarge on the obvious truth contained in this type—viz., that the separation of the children of Israel from all other nations of the world, so that the people should ever “dwell above,” signified that the true Church of God should be separate from sinners, and hold spiritual communion only with God.

The continual promises of power to the children of Israel over all their enemies, if they would only obey God and walk in His statutes, is a beautiful and expressive type of that great principle of truth—that holiness is power; and which will, in that day, receive a demonstration in the experience of the Church in opposition to that lie of Satan’s—that money is power: for, surely, in that day the worshippers of gold shall be made to drink thereof, and the rust of it shall eat into the flesh of man as fire.

The altar built by Moses under the hill, and the erection of the twelve pillars by its side, and his causing the young men of the children of Israel to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings thereon, evidently conveys to us the establishment of a temporary form of national worship by the divine authority until the more perfect tabernacle was completed; and seems to point, as respects the future, to the first act of the glorified saints, when they shall descend from the cloud of

glory to set the disordered Church on earth in order.

Many of the subsequent judgments which befel the children of Israel in the wilderness, in consequence of their rebellion and disobedience against God, and resistance of His authority in the person of Moses, are, to say the least, very expressive of similar manifestations of evil, which it is reasonable to suppose will be developed among such a heterogeneous mass, as our interpretation supposes will be brought up out of the fleshly condition of the Church into this spiritual wilderness. The judgment of the fiery serpents receives a singularly apt interpretation in that flood of evil and unclean spirits—those devils which that old serpent, the dragon, will cast out of his mouth, with the hope of carrying away the Church in the flood, whilst lying in her feeble and helpless condition : whilst the judgment of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, prefigures that quick and overwhelming destruction, which constitutes the appropriate punishment of all open rebellion against God's authority : nor can we fail to observe that this open rebellion against the authority of Moses, exhibited by Korah and his companions, and which spirit was not effectually subdued even on witnessing that awful infliction of God's judgment—and was, therefore, immediately followed by

a plague from the Lord—was followed by the full establishment of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood—the divine selection of which families, to be priests for ever before the Lord, was placed beyond all doubt by the miraculous budding of Aaron's rod, which was to be kept in the sanctuary as a token against the rebels, and as a perpetual record in the midst of the children of Israel, that the appointment of a priesthood is God's own peculiar prerogative. For these things were done, in order that Moses might "quite take away" the murmurings of the children of Israel, against God in this particular matter; and which moreover, we might add, seems to have stirred up the most violent opposition upon the part of the whole Jewish nation (Numb. xvii).

It may be, perhaps, inconceivable to men in this generation, with their acknowledged habits of religious decorum and propriety, as well as their ostensible submission to the divine decrees, that such insane opposition to God's laws either exists in the heart of the Church; or, if it does, that a period can ever arrive in her history which can possibly occasion its development. We look back upon the times of our fathers and upon the acts of our predecessors in either dispensation, and exclaim—"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with

them in their sins : " and, yet, he is but an ignorant observer of the human heart, and a poor adept in its deceitfulness, as well as but a shallow discernor of the condition of the Church, who cannot detect, lurking unseen beneath this smooth exterior, as deadly an opposition against all spiritual truth as ever manifested itself in the literal history of the children of Israel. We believe ourselves that, so far from the supernatural appearances which will attest the immediate presence of Christ in the cloud of glory having the effect of subduing, as some might suppose, all resistance to God's decrees, their exhibition will have the very contrary effect : so that, so far from destroying this spirit, the manifestation of such supernatural power will only occasion its development in outward acts of rebellion against God. It is, moreover, quite in accordance with the original type, as well as in perfect harmony with the experience and history of mankind, to imagine that the most determined opposition may yet be manifested to the establishment of that spiritual priesthood without whose authority the Church, in those days of confusion and disorder, could never be reconstituted and rebuilt.

But, if the events and transactions which happened to the children of Israel *before* the setting up of the tabernacle were only temporary and

anticipative of its completion, it is equally clear that, *when completed*, all *future* laws and enactments were supposed to proceed from its sacred interior, and to have for their object the more perfect development of that ecclesiastical economy, which emanated from Him who then dwelt between the cherubim.

Immediately the tabernacle was set up, Moses was commanded first to cleanse Aaron and his sons—then the Levites—and afterwards the whole congregation of the people, by putting without the camp every leper, and every one that had an issue, and whatsoever was defiled by the dead : after which, the laws concerning the defilement of women, the law of jealousy, and the law of the Nazarite, were given : from all of which we perceive, when contemplated as types having reference to the future condition of the spiritual Church of God in the wilderness, precisely the same truth conveyed to the apostle John by the measurement of the temple and the altar, and them that worshipped therein (Revelation xi.) : so that the typical history of the Jews, as well as St. John's symbolical prophecy in the Apocalypse, would seem to point to one and the same period in the future history of the spiritual Church—viz., that time when Christ comes in person to His temple to purify the sons of Levi, and through

them the whole of His Church, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. It will prove to be a time when no infidels, lepers, nor those who habitually allow the sensualities of the flesh to proceed from them—expressively symbolized by the issues—neither any dead thing—those in whom there is no action of spiritual life—shall have endurance in the Church of God;* but when all in the spiritual temple shall be holiness to the Lord, yea, even the pots in the Lord's house. Neither shall any abide therein who are defiled by other Churches, or tainted with the love of the world; for the Lord is a jealous God, and will no more condescend to receive the homage of a divided heart: it is the Nazarite condition of the Church, when none but Nazarites shall be accepted before Him—that day when the temple of God shall be measured by the rod of the angel, and all without its sacred precincts given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot of men.

* It is to be observed that these three classes of the unclean, comprehend every form of spiritual evil which appertains to man in the Church—the infidel or avowed unbeliever; the sensualist; and those who, instead of possessing the life of Christ, are spiritually dead: there is not to be found a fourth class of the spiritually unclean who may not, with strict propriety, be included under one of these three.

It is not our purpose to attempt any analogy (which nevertheless doubtless exists) between the interior arrangements and decorations of the Mosaic tabernacle, and the spiritual realities, which they all prefigure; not, however, because we have little or nothing to advance on the subject, but because the present treatise professes to be more historical than descriptive; and rather to mark the general outline of the future picture than to fill up its various and minuter shadings. But, independently of this consideration, we think, as Moses alone saw the pattern or model in the Mount, and only knew the appropriate place of every board in the tabernacle he was charged to build up, or the fitting uses of every hook and covering in the tent, as well as the adjustment of all its ornamental work, that it is reserved for the glorified saints, whom we regard as the true antitype to Moses, to bring out in all its fulness that spiritual building, of which the Mosaic tabernacle was only the outward symbol. We cannot, however, refrain from a remark as to one part of its interior arrangements, to which, however, we must restrict our observations, but which we are induced to make, because, as appears to us, very erroneous notions are generally entertained on the subject; and, moreover, because, if sound, the criticism involves

a very important and a very deep spiritual truth confirming our general interpretation—we refer to the kind of faces of the two cherubim placed over the mercy seat.

It is generally supposed—upon what grounds we are quite ignorant—that these two cherubim bore the semblance of the human face. We think it is quite evident that, so far from this being the case, they exhibited the face of an ox, and not the face of a man. And our reasons for such a belief, so contrary to the common impression upon the subject, are derived, in the first place, from the implied declaration of Scripture; and, in the second, from the peculiarly appropriate symbol which the face of an ox presents, when the whole figure is taken as emblematical of the spiritual Church of Christ, of which, as already shown, the cherubim were the true emblem in the Mosaic tabernacle.

It must be admitted by all, that the prophet Ezekiel knew what the face of a cherub was; and if the reader will refer to that book of prophecy (chap. x. 14), he will find that in his description of the four cherubim which he saw coming out of the north, as recorded in the *first* chapter, and which afterwards again appeared to him (chap. x. 20), that, whilst in the former case these four cherubim are described as having each

four faces—viz., of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (chap. i. 10); yet, that in the subsequent vision, as recorded in the tenth chapter, in referring to the *same cherubim*, he omits altogether the face of an ox, and substitutes in its place the face of a cherub; plainly significant of the fact (which must have been too well known to the children of Israel to require explanation), that the face of an ox and the face of a cherub were one and the same thing; and therefore, in the description, the expression was used by him as synonymous terms, and so recognised by the Jews. If this were not the case, Ezekiel's two accounts of the same cherubim are found materially to differ the one from the other in a most essential point, which is quite inadmissible: and, therefore, we think the conclusion is incontrovertible that the face of the cherubim, both in the tabernacle and as subsequently set up in the Jewish temple, was the face of an ox, and not that of a man. At any rate we think it must be conceded, with this obvious deduction derived from the Scriptures in favour of such an opinion, that the *onus* lies with those who feel disposed to dispute the validity of the criticism to prove the cherub's face was that of a man, but which we think will be found difficult to do upon Scripture testimony, so that any well grounded objection can be consist-

ently maintained against the truth of our own conclusion.

It may be asked, even supposing the face in the cherubim in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the Jewish temple, was that of an ox, and not that of a man, of what importance to the Church is the establishment of such a fact? To which enquiry we answer—much, every way: that is, if any value is to be attached to the emblematical significance of either the tabernacle or temple form of Jewish worship, as expressive of spiritual truths in the Church of God: inasmuch as if the face of an ox (of which meaning of the symbol there can be no doubt) is emblematical of that Christ-like patience which is one of the most essential attributes of the pastoral office in the Church, and which is moreover the outward expression of the divine grace of love in the heart, it confirms the conclusion, derived from other sources, that it is the perfection of this heavenly grace which God Himself delights to look upon in His Church; and the possession of which can alone find acceptance in His sight, or confer the privilege of her entrance into the heavens itself—even into the presence of Christ at His appearing, of which the holy of holies, where the cherubim were placed, was only the feeble type and foreshadow.

Now, if the fruits of the flesh—impatience, dis-

content, repinings, murmurings, and such like—from their intrinsically unlovely character, are so offensive and repellent even in the sight of any man whose mind is at all well tutored and disciplined by the fear of God—that is, when he himself is not the manifester of these evil passions—with what eyes must a pure and holy God look upon such an exhibition of spiritual wickedness and infirmity? We confess, when we contemplate this expressive emblem, and then turn our observation on the Church, the glaring defection is too painful to dwell upon; and we feel more disposed to close our eyes to the distressing contrast she exhibits than comment upon its palpable flagrancy. But it is perfectly useless to blind our perceptions, and then flatter ourselves the evil does not exist. The time for theories is past, and the time for realities has come—the period for the exhibition of the model has now ended, and the day for the erection of the superstructure itself has arrived.

The apostle James says—"If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body," and which expression of the apostle's may be termed a terse commentary upon our Lord's sermon upon the Mount, wherein Christ sets forth Himself as the perfect pattern of the meek and lowly One whose example all His disciples should imitate. It is,

moreover, to be observed that our Lord Himself attaches the idea of perfection, *even as His Father was perfect*, to the spiritual observance of the perfect law of love as explained and inculcated in that sermon, concluding that unrivalled exhortation with the memorable words—"Be ye **THEREFORE** perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Now, it is very worthy of observation, that whilst all the discourses of our Lord, as contained in the Gospels, describe only the *attitude* of those who shall be watching for the Lord's approach, and, by inference, those who will be changed in the day of His appearing; yet, that He plainly refers to the spiritual *condition* and *attainments* of those who shall escape that fearful day of tribulation in his epistle to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia, and distinctly announces, **BECAUSE** those who shall be living in the day immediately preceding the final hour of temptation to the Church *have kept the word of His patience*, that *they* shall be kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth; from which we learn that it is those, and those only, who individually are thus perfected by the trial of their faith, who are deemed worthy to escape those things which are coming upon the earth, and

to stand before the Son of Man : those, in fact, who, being spiritually exercised by aiming at this high standard of Christian perfection, are thus prepared and purified for the presence of the Lord Himself, without enduring that fiery trial which shall come upon the rest of the Church to purge away *their* dross.*

* We fear there is a notion too prevalent that it is only needful for a man to hold an orthodox faith, and to acknowledge the doctrine of the Lord's second advent, to ensure to himself, as a matter of course, the high distinction of a translation into the heavenly state at the appearance of Jesus Christ—than which, we believe, there cannot be a more fatal delusion. No man's faith could be sounder than St. Paul's, as to the expectation of the Lord's personal appearance again upon this earth, or in His subsequent Millennial reign ; and yet *he* speaks of the hope of attaining to the resurrection from amongst the dead (Phil. iii. 10, *et. seq.*) as a thing he had yet to **AGONIZE FOR**, and of which inestimable prize he was by no means then certain he should obtain ; for he expressly declares he did not count himself to have then apprehended that high distinction of a resurrection out from amongst the dead ; but *was then* pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of that high calling ; if, by **ANY MEANS**, at **ANY COST** and **SACRIFICE**, he might attain to it—counting all other things as dung, so that he might thus win Christ : for no one will contend St. Paul was, in that epistle, merely alluding to the personal salvation of his soul ; but, on the contrary, that this strong language indicated his fervent aspirations after the pre-eminent distinction of the first resurrection on the instant of the Lord's appearing. With the example of such a man as St. Paul before us, and then casting our eyes within our own hearts and upon all around us in the Church, we confess we are filled with the deepest awe, and are

It is this mark of patience and love which is stamped upon the foreheads of the hundred and forty and four thousand, which seals *them* from the ensuing judgments, and, indeed, places them in the condition of its inflictors. The doctrinal truth is, that God *will have* a Church reflecting the image of His own well-beloved Son, and those who, by previous spiritual discipline, are thus perfected by love, will escape the ordeal of fire; whereas, those who will not, but hold Christ with one hand and the world with the other, must be purified by fiery judgments.

Nor does the supposition of the present per-

ready to exclaim, with the prophet of old—"But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" We cannot but marvel and feel awe-struck at the fearful contrast exhibited between St. Paul and ourselves—the agonizing energy of the apostle, when compared with the hasty assumption, not to say unholy facility, with which some of us place ourselves among that distinguished company of glorified saints; whilst, alas! too many of us, with the words of this bright and glorious hope on our lips, have but little of the spirit of Christ in our hearts, or manifest it in our lives; and whilst, by all our acts and demeanour, we plainly manifest ourselves to be lovers of the world. We fear too many, in the agony of their disappointment, will in that day exclaim—"Lord, Lord! have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils?"—to whom the Lord Himself will reply—"I never knew you." This will prove to be *one* of the many evil fruits of substituting the doctrines of a creed—the visible ordinances of the Church and mere outward consistency—for the spiritual reality itself.

fectibility of individuals, or the future perfectibility of the Church, even remotely imply any despite to the blood of Christ, which can alone cleanse the soul in the sight of God; or to the doctrine of imputed righteousness; but, on the contrary, it brings out into reality the full truth which is contained in the atonement, inasmuch as it supposes that **THEREBY** a man is placed in the condition of yielding to God a holy life; and this doctrine, therefore, exhibits the blood of Christ as possessing a two-fold virtue: the one, the cleansing of the soul from the past guilt and defilement of sin; and the other, deliverance from its future power: and the fulness of this truth will be made manifest in that period of the history of the Church when, as the apostle John declares, the brethren shall overcome Satan and the beast by the blood of the Lamb, not loving their lives unto the death (Rev. xii. 11). It will scarcely be needful to add that he who receives the one side of the truth without the other had better never have heard of the blood of Christ at all.

Now, if our conceptions of the spiritual standing of the Church be true, there is, to say the least, a very singular coincidence between her present condition and this (otherwise unaccountable) substitution of the face of the man for the

face of the ox already alluded to as being so prevalent ; for we must not forget that even the errors of man are sometimes made subservient to the expression of great truths ;* and if, as some

* There can scarcely exist a stronger illustration of the truth of this remark than that supplied us by the modern seceders to the Papal Church ; for, looking above and beyond the mere outward fact of their apostasy to an irreclaimably corrupt Church, when viewed as an ecclesiastical hierarchy, it is not difficult to discern in the movement a sign to all Christendom that a witness from a purer Church is about to penetrate her bosom, and enlighten that gross darkness in which she is now so deeply involved. The rod of God's strength shall yet proceed from the British Zion ; though, perhaps, not in accordance with our own preconceived notions. Even granting the pretensions of the most extreme and rigid Protestantism, we contend that the Romish Church is still a Church ; and, moreover, responsible to God for Church covenants, and, THEREFORE, entitled to a warning voice before God's final judgments are brought upon her : and which, we believe, if we may judge by the analogy of God's dealings with all mankind ever since the creation of the world, she will most assuredly receive. Wherefore should *one* of the ten kingdoms receive a note of the coming of the Lord and of approaching judgment, and *not all* ? Britain has received that warning, not only by act, but by the preaching of the ministers in her Church, now for nearly a quarter of a century ; and is not every baptised man who is in covenant with God entitled to the same act of grace ? " Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ? " Let us, therefore, hope that these secessions into the visible Church in Christendom is the sign that health shall yet proceed from the more sanitary part of the Catholic body, if not for the healing of the whole, yet for the deliverance of multitudes within the outer circle ;

suppose, the face of the man in the head of the cherubim is emblematical of the evangelists' office in the Church, the exercise of which functions has respect only to man's personal salvation, then the substitution of one symbolical face for another would seem to indicate that, in the latter days of the history of the Church, both her experience and doctrine would not reach beyond the first principles of spiritual truth. And it will be scarcely necessary to observe that it is no uncommon sentiment to hear propounded in these days, that the end and object of all God's

especially when the prophecies of Scripture expressly declare the fact that a countless multitude shall be gathered into the garner of the Lord by the ministries of those three angels who were seen in the vision flying through the midst of heaven, commissioned to preach the everlasting Gospel to the *then* inhabitants of the earth. Thus, the appearance of Christ in the air, to pluck the firstfruits of the harvest at the commencement of the seventh vial, would have especial reference to that portion of Christendom to whom the notice of His speedy approach was first sent—namely, Britain; and Christ's descent from the clouds of heaven, to this terraqueous globe, at its expiration, to the rest of Christendom. This supposition is in perfect accordance with our whole system of interpretation of the great day of the Lord; nor can we, moreover, conceive how the same warning voice can, at one and the same time, reach two such extreme opposites in the whole baptised body as the Protestant and Papal Churches—the one dwelling comparatively in light, and the other in darkness that may be felt—thus rendering two separate and distinct warnings almost indispensable.

revelations to man is simply the salvation of his soul, without any reference whatever to his own progressive transformation into God's image here, or the ultimate development of God's glory hereafter.

There can be little doubt but that the ecclesiastical history of the Jews, as a nation, must be dated from the *descent* of Jehovah upon Mount Sinai, and the *ascent* of Moses into that cloud of glory which then enshrined the divine Majesty: and if, as we judge, that visible manifestation of God's glory was typical of the residence of Christ in the clouds of heaven, during the early part of the seventh vial—and Moses, acting as mediator between God and the children of Israel, prefigured the risen and glorified saints who shall then act as messengers of mercy to the Church in the wilderness of this earth—then it follows that the appearance of Christ in the air, and the translation of the living and the resurrection of the dead saints, mark the commencing era of this new *eon* in the history of the spiritual Church; and, we think, the whole typical representation corresponds with so much exactness to the interpretation we have gathered of that period from the prophecies that we are fully justified in the conclusion, the glorious manifestations of God's majesty and power on Mount Sinai, with all the

wonderful events which then occurred, were recorded for the express purpose of embodying in a typical form, the far more magnificent and important supernatural phenomena of the great day of God Almighty, when He, who revealed Himself to Moses, shall appear as the God-Man in the cloud of glory, surrounded with the glorious company of the firstborn in heaven itself; and, through and by them, issuing His mandates to the Church on earth, guiding and ruling over them in their wilderness condition.

Our limits preclude the possibility of enlarging upon this glorious type of the future, which is thus presented to our contemplation in this bright era of the history of the Jewish nation; but, though the nations' contiguity to God was purchased at the expence of whole hecatombs of that rebellious and stiff-necked people, yet a spiritual mind, nevertheless, delights to dwell on this glorious episode in their history, and contemplates with holy awe, yet with thrilling ecstasy, the bright visioned mediator, communicating the behests of Jehovah to the congregated children of Israel. The dread inspired among the people by the consciousness of the immediate personal presence of Deity Himself—the supernatural glories with which God was surrounded, and the manifestation of His glory

and power from the holy Mount—the infinite majesty and holiness yet grace displayed in God's intercourse with man, and the grandeur which distinguished the whole scene, with many other important tokens of the Divine Presence, to which we cannot at present allude—are all replete with significance, when contemplated as a series of types applicable to the personal residence of Christ with His saints in the air, directing and governing the Church on earth. Nor do we think, after these hints of the existence of such an analogy between these two periods in the history of the Jewish and Gentile Churches, that it requires either a very high attainment of spiritual discernment, or an unusually enlightened mind, so to fill up the picture as to be able to realize somewhat of the glorious future, when the thunders of that God-Man, who was once buffeted and spit upon, and whose name is even now treated by the proud and lofty of the earth as poor and mean, are heard rending the heavens with their peals, and striking terror into the hearts of the kings of the earth.

Now, after the tabernacle was completed and consecrated, the setting apart and purification of the priesthood took place; and subsequently, as we have already noticed, that of the people. The whole of the Levitical law is full of instruc-

tion when contemplated as a typical representation of that spiritual priesthood in the Church of Christ which, we suppose, will be more fully developed in that day when the spiritual tabernacle shall be fully set up. The limits, however, which we have prescribed ourselves, for the continuance of this publication, will preclude the possibility of entering at any length into this typical treasury of divine truth. It will, however, be necessary, even to give our readers a faint outline only of the future history of the Church, as it presents itself to our view, to touch cursorily upon one or two of the most prominent characteristics of those laws by which the Jewish priesthood were regulated.

One of those enactments was, that the Levites should not hold any separate inheritance; and the reason given by God Himself why they should not have possessions as the other children of Israel, was, because the Levites were His: the Lord, the God of Israel, was *their* inheritance; and this law does not imply, as the faithlessness of man might suggest, that thereby God had made a *less* provision for them than for the rest of the nation; but, on the contrary, inasmuch as they were thus highly distinguished by being placed more immediately near the person of God Himself, *their* provision would become the object of His now especial care.

This stipulation concerning the Levites, when regarded as a type, would seem to imply, that those who would serve God in that spiritual tabernacle which shall be reared for the worship of God, when the woman is in her wilderness condition, shall be called on to exhibit a first pledge of their sincerity, by casting themselves solely upon the provision of God's house, thereby affording the Church an earnest of the nature of her future trial, by voluntarily denuding themselves of all outward possessions : for if we are to be guided by the type, one of the laws of that spiritual priesthood shall be, that the priests shall abandon all things visible, that they may thereby set an example to the whole Church of unreservedly casting themselves upon Him, without whose knowledge a sparrow falleth not to the ground, and who has numbered the hairs in the heads of all His children. None shall keep back part of the price and live ; for the day will have arrived when He who hath the eyes of fire shall sit in His seat of judgment, as a refiner and purifier of silver, purifying the sons of Levi, and purging them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness (Malachi iii. 3). Ah ! then will it be seen that there is a discernment, even in the Church on earth, between the righteous and the wicked—

between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not. How many in that day, when only the first test is put forth to try the true metal of the Church, will turn away sorrowful ? —how many will prove that the love of the world has extinguished the love of the Father.

And is it, then, such a difficult thing to trust God ? Will He who hath given life withhold meat ? Will He who hath framed and fashioned this body, and wrought it so curiously, containing in itself, it may be, the germ of future worlds, withhold the covering of our shame ? Can we not trust Him for the less who hath given the greater ? Oh shame ! that men do not perceive that it is far better to be fed by God than from any stored treasure ; and that the bread of His sanctuary, provided by His own most gracious love and care, is far sweeter to the taste when thus dispensed fresh from His hand, than the most costly dainty of man's art and device ! It is the only royal way of enjoying the blessings which wealth bestows, without incurring the accompanying cares of possession.

Such a requirement at the hands of the ministers of the Church in those days, constituted as the Church is now, may sound very hypothetical in the ears of this generation ; but, improbable as it may appear to our prejudices, Christendom

has, nevertheless, supplied the Church with ~~an~~ constant memorial of its reality ; inasmuch as ~~as~~ every man who, professing to forsake the world, and purposing to yield himself up entirely to God, by abandoning its cares and pleasures in the seclusion of a monastic life, is required to give this first pledge of his sincerity, by pouring all his worldly wealth into the bosom of the Church. Nor should we feel any surprise at such an initiative act, required from the spiritual ministries of the Church at the time we refer to, when we reflect that *all* within her bosom in that day must be holy ; and, if even the pots in the Lord's house are holiness unto the Lord, the priesthood themselves must be *most holy* ; so that neither the love of the world, or the smell of flesh upon the garment, shall be endured in God's spiritual sanctuary. The time will then have arrived when the mere admission of theoretical truth shall give place to the reality of truth itself.

Precisely the same principle was manifested in the selection of rulers over tens, hundreds, and thousands, when Moses, at the suggestion of Jethro, thus temporarily subdivided his authority over the children of Israel ; for the simple qualification for such rule was, that the men thus invested with rulership should be those who feared God, loved the truth, and hated covetousness.

Nor can we fail here to direct the reader's attention to the concurrent testimony which the Scriptures afford us of the truth of our general expositions ; for, whether we derive our conclusions from the interpretation of the symbols of the Apocalypse—the spiritual signification of the types—or the more express declarations of the prophetic word of God, they alike testify that those who will prove faithful in that day must be prepared to abandon ALL for the love of Christ ; the sincerity of which absolute and unreserved devotion to God will, no doubt, in many cases be tested—perhaps in all—by a literal compliance with the requisition.

There can scarcely exist a stronger justification of the truth of the typical parallel we have attempted to draw, between the Mosaic dispensation and the future history of the Church, than that which is to be found in the prophet Malachi, who connects the sudden coming of the Lord to His spiritual temple with the purification of the sons of Levi, and which is obviously referred to by the prophet as one of His first acts on that occasion ; and it is quite evident, from the whole tenor of the prophecy, as well as from the universal testimony of Scripture, that this act of purification must have a reference to the spiritual Church of Christ as well as to the Jewish priesthood ; and so,

consequently, we conclude that the former is typical of the latter.

We know well the bitter hostility such a sentiment will raise in the hearts of most men ; but, whilst this instinctive dread of such an uncompromising test of discipleship, as we suppose will exist, furnishes us with incontestable evidence of the universal prevalence of the vice of covetousness, it, at the same time, conveys to our apprehensions the stern severity and holiness which will rule in the house of God during the infidel period, and the unparalleled trials and temptations to which the Church will then be exposed, and which nothing short of the most absolute abandonment of self will enable her to overcome.

The elevation of this spiritual tabernacle of "lively stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5)—that is, living men—out of such a condition of confusion and disorder, which our interpretation supposes the Church will exhibit immediately after the appearance of the Lord in the air, and the translation of the living saints—would seem to involve the necessity of some pattern being previously given, by which design the antitype to Moses should raise up this spiritual fabric, and thus reorganize the whole Catholic Church as an ecclesiastical body. Now, we gather from the type that Moses only saw the pattern in the Mount ; he had it not before

him when he constructed the tabernacle itself; from which we infer that it is very probable the Catholic Church may have contained within her bosom the germ of some such purpose of God, though it is quite conceivable, being essentially a spiritual work, that it might, for a time, remain unrecognized by the general body of the baptised. Indeed, if we refer to the figure, we should rather conclude that such a model would at first be concealed from general observation, inasmuch as an architect does not exhibit *generally* the plans of the future structure until their completion, but seeks rather to prepare them in the secret of his own chamber until finished, when the beholder is thus enabled to form an accurate idea of the general effect of the proposed superstructure. It should not, therefore, be any source of surprise were we to find that such a model is discoverable in the spiritual Church of Christ, though its development might have escaped general observation until the time shall fully arrive for perfecting the original design. We are not, however, sufficiently advanced in our interpretations of the future history of the Church, during the period of the seventh vial, to prosecute such an enquiry—particularly as if it ever existed and has escaped general recognition, it must be a difficult task to prove satisfac-

torily to the reader that such a purpose has been working, concealed, it may be, amidst the fitful changes and feverish symptoms—not to say spiritual revolutions—the Church has exhibited for many years past; but, nevertheless, which internal struggles, as well as external assaults, indicate some approaching change in her condition which few men are careful to define. We must, however, expect to discover a close resemblance between the model and the tabernacle itself, just as the former, though on a smaller scale, presents the same exact proportions which the latter subsequently will exhibit when complete. But when the Master-builder arrives, the covering which may now conceal the pattern shall be taken away, and its curious and beautiful proportions discovered to the admiring gaze of the Church, who, ravished with its beauty, shall set themselves with willing hearts and ready hands to build up the noble structure; and the Head-stone thereof shall yet be brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. But, alas! it often happens that some who may have assisted in the original design and model, have no hand in laying one stone upon another in the building; and many who begin with the building do not always live to witness its completion: for though many are called few are chosen; and if our own appre-

hensions of that time of trial be true, which the Church will have to pass through during that "hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth," it presents a spectacle of fiery judgment among the people of God, at which the stoutest heart and the most self-complacent formalist may well quail ; for God's stern requisitions of holiness from His Church will admit of no reserves—His demands for the image of Christ, of no compromise or subterfuge.

If we take a retrospective view of the history of the world ever since its creation down to the present times, and then prospectively glance on to the commencement of the eternal age after the Millennial glory, it is easy to discern one great truth continually exhibiting itself throughout all its mutations and changes—viz., that there is almost invariably a purpose of God first manifested, which for a time appears (but only appears) to be defeated ; out of which apparent defeat God ultimately will bring forth a more perfect and glorious result. Thus, from the material creation, God will re-create the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ; and re-produce, from present confusion and disorder, all the glories of the spiritual material world—out of generation cometh

regeneration. Instead of the creation paradise, wherein dwelt our first parents alone, God will substitute that heavenly paradise bearing the tree of life, whose leaves shall be for the healing of the nations, and of whose fruit all shall freely partake who have the right of entrance into the heavenly city. The perfection and beauty of the first Adam shall give place to the spiritual glories of the second, of whom he was but a type, surrounded as he was with delights in the garden of Eden, with the visible creation under his feet. The first world was destroyed by water, to be succeeded in the regeneration of all things by its re-establishment in more than creation beauty, and upon a foundation which shall never be shaken. The tabernacle was broken up when the temple was built, and the temple itself was destroyed when the spiritual form of worship was given to the children of men; and yet we learn from Ezekiel that the literal temple shall also be rebuilt. The first set of tables given to Moses was broken, and the second alone remained. The first possession of the land of Canaan by the children of Israel was but for a time; and the country, once flowing with milk and honey, but now barren and desolate, is trodden by the feet of the heathen: yet we know that, at the restoration of the tribes, "they shall

inherit the land for ever." Natural death is but the portal of everlasting life ; corruption and mortality but the process through which God will bring forth the incorruptible and immortal. The early rain—the pentecostal effusion of the Holy Ghost—has ceased to fructify and beautify the Church of God ; but the scanty rain of spring will be shortly succeeded by the more copious showers of the latter rain, which shall yet bring the spiritual fruits of the Church to perfection ; and the fall of all creation will prove as the wax which needeth to be first melted, to receive upon it its eternal superscription of everlasting life and blessedness—life out of death—indissolubility out of dissolution. Let us not, therefore, be discouraged, even though the first model of the spiritual temple of God may be broken up ; but rest in hope, holding fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, knowing that He who hath begun to build will, in His own time and way, perfect that which is His own work ; and believing that we shall shortly see, though the first tables may have been broken, Moses yet once again descending from the Mount—the cloud of glory—the risen saints having their visage brightened with the glory of God, and their countenances beaming with celestial blessedness and joy ; and thus, when God putteth

His hand the second time to raise a spiritual tabernacle for Himself, the purpose shall be fully accomplished, and none shall let or hinder. No language can adequately describe the glorious effulgence of that day of the Lord, when He sitteth in the clouds of heaven, clothed with divine majesty. The pen must drop from an archangel's hand in attempting to portray the glorious vision, and, therefore it needs to be exhibited in a reality as upon Mount Sinai. The lips of the angels of God, and the countless hosts of heaven at first are silent with wonder and astonishment, and then burst forth in songs of praise and thanksgivings: eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the glorious things which God hath prepared for those who love Him; yet are *some* of these glories revealed to faith—such as we are able to bear whilst clothed only with mortality. But a day is at hand when He who is our life shall appear—*then* shall we see even as we are seen, and know even as we are known; for, when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory; for we shall see Him as He is. Already are the wheels of His chariot heard in the distance—already do we see the no longer distant cloud fringed with His coming glory—already does the

horizon gleam with the brightness of His appearing—and shortly shall that shout of joy be heard throughout the region of the heavens—"Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

But look! the Apocalyptic vision changes—the scene shifts—and behold! a gorgeous temple rises into view, emblazoned with gold—fair and beautiful in all its proportions and parts.

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THE RETROSPECT.

No. XIII.

THE Jewish ecclesiastical superstructures present **three** distinct and separate points of observation—viz., the pattern which God gave to Moses in **the** mount—the tabernacle itself which was raised **up** in the wilderness according to the pattern—and the temple, of which the tabernacle was the true model.

We have already seen, in our two preceding numbers, that the work which the Church will have to do in the symbolic wilderness, whither she is represented as flying after giving birth to the man child, will be to raise up a spiritual tabernacle to God; and the obvious and indissoluble connection which exists between the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the temple at Jerusalem, enables us thus to connect this first period of three years and a half, which the sym-

bolic woman is supposed in the figure to spend in the wilderness, with the same period of time during which the admeasurement of the "temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein" occurs.

If the above conclusion be sound, then we have linked together the only two disconnected eras of three years and a half each, into which four equal parts we have seen the prophecy subdivides the first fourteen years of the seventh and last Vial of wrath; for it is very evident that the vision, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, containing the other three histories of three years and a half, is a connected prophecy, and descriptive of events which are to occur in consecutive order in the last days of the history of the Church—that is, during the times of the infidel Antichrist, and admitted to be consecutive in their fulfilment by the consent of most modern commentators.

But whilst we avail ourselves of this evident connection between the tabernacle and the temple, when considered as symbols, to ascertain the exact order of the events described as occurring during these four periods of time, and contend that the measurement of the temple, as a still unfulfilled prophecy, applicable to the Christian dispensation, is descriptive of the second of these

Four eras, we are far from insisting that therefore this short period of three years and a half (literally) exhausts the original type; inasmuch as it is indisputable that the temple form of worship points to the millennial dispensation rather than to the present as the true period for its fulfilment; nevertheless, the selection of these two Jewish symbols enables us not only to connect these three eras with the period of the woman's sojourn in the wilderness; but likewise to infer, from the substitution of the symbol of the temple for the tabernacle, that at the close of this dispensation (that is, during the last fourteen years of the harvest), there will then be an incipient showing forth of the ultimate purpose of God throughout Christendom, to which the symbolic prophecy of measuring the temple distinctly applies. Such an interpretation is in perfect accordance with the prophetic method; nor will our readers require to be reminded that one fulfilment of a prophecy, so far from exhausting it, should only be regarded as but another development of its ultimate end and object, thereby affording the Church guidance for the present, whilst, at the same time, it casts increased light on the future.

Upon the above principle it is reasonable to suppose that, as the Jewish economy contained, within its outward forms and ceremonial obser-

vances, the more spiritual dispensation which was to follow, that the present Church likewise encloses within her bosom, under a symbol, the glories of the millennial reign ; so that, as the spiritual form of truth was presented to the faith of the Jew in his carnal ordinances, the powers of the world to come are the proper objects of faith and hope of the spiritually-minded in the Church of Christ. It follows, therefore, from these premises, that we should expect to discover, during some period in the history of the Church, a faint outline of that millennial glory which now so many among the baptized are professing to expect : and we are not aware that any of the prophecies refer with so much precision to that period as that recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, when considered in its ecclesiastical aspect. But it should not be forgotten, whilst that prophecy of the measurement of the temple has an application incipiently to the present dispensation, that nevertheless the Christian Gentile Church, during her militant condition on this earth, must still be regarded as in her tabernacle state—that is, during the whole period of her migrations in the wilderness of the world—until her translation into the heavenly condition ; though, for the purpose of distinguishing the commencement of a new era in her his-

tory, she is, in the vision, represented as assuming the form of a temple. But this truth will appear more evident as we proceed with our interpretations.

The problem which thus presents itself for solution resolves itself into the simple question—What particular phenomena the symbol of the Jewish temple points to in the Christian Church? And, what is meant by “the reed like unto a rod,” with which the angel is represented in the figure as measuring “the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” whilst those who are in “the court, which is without the temple,” are left out, and are not measured—that is, when this portion of the prophecy is applied to the Church during the infidel period?

It will be scarcely necessary to justify the appropriation of the Jewish temple as a symbol of the Church of Christ. Our Lord expressly alluded to Himself as being the true temple of God; and we know that that which is true of Christ, as the Head, is also true mystically—but not, therefore, the less substantially—of the spiritual members of His body; and this interpretation is in perfect accordance with the law of all types which, of necessity, must concentrate themselves in our Lord Himself, because, in His person, all truth is headed up, and He is the

only complete manifestation, in a single person, of the invisible Godhead : but still it is evident that, whilst the types in the Mosaic economy all pointed to Him as to a common centre, yet that subsequently to His death and resurrection, and on the establishment of the spiritual Church, they all, as it were, diverge again from Him, and possess another application in that dispensation, out of which alone are gathered the members of His mystical body.

Now, the pattern of the tabernacle was shown by God to Moses alone ; though the tabernacle itself, and the temple which succeeded the tabernacle, were for the national worship.

A very slight attention to the interior construction of both the tabernacle and the temple is quite sufficient to convince us, that the former was designed, not only as a temporary erection wherein the children of Israel might offer their worship unto God whilst sojourning in the wilderness, but was also expressly intended as a model, to be kept as a constant memorial of that more permanent superstructure which the nation were to build when the proper time, in the purpose of God, had fully arrived.

If, therefore, the tabernacle in the wilderness was the model of the future temple, we should naturally expect to see—taking both to be sym-

bols of the Church—the manifestation of a spiritual tabernacle before that of the spiritual temple ; nor can there be much doubt that these two separate superstructures were intended to prefigure two distinct dispensations of God to man—the one preceding and enclosing within its bosom the germ of the other : the tabernacle being the prefigurement of the spiritual dispensation to the Christian Church during her migrations in the wilderness of this earth ; whilst the temple, in all its glory, points with sufficient significance to the establishment of Christ's Church throughout the world during the millenium.

It may not, however, be urged that because the tabernacle, as a symbol, has an application to the entire period of the Christian dispensation, that, therefore, it cannot have any more particular allusion to the history of the Church in the latter days ; inasmuch as such an argument, instead of proving the fallacy of our position, that it has such a specific reference, strengthens and confirms it, because all the prophecies of Scripture intimate that the earlier history and experience of the Church will be acted over again during the infidel period, and which period is now generally recognized by interpreters as being the termination of her earthly career.

In perfect conformity with this idea, and quite

irrespective of any arguments derivable from the consecutive order in the development of the tabernacle and temple, but gathering our information from a fair and obvious interpretation of the symbolic prophecies as contained in the Apocalypse, we arrived at the conclusion, that the Church would be occupied in her wilderness state in raising a spiritual tabernacle to God ; and, when she is perfected in this form, the symbols lead us to infer, that she will exhibit to the world a prefiguration (before the close of the present dispensation) of the millennial Church, of which Solomon's temple, with all its gorgeous ornaments and appendages, was the appropriate and expressive type.

In order, therefore, to ascertain the true attitude of the Church in her symbolically temple condition, it will be necessary to draw some comparison between the Jewish tabernacle and temple ; and examine, moreover, in what respect these two separate and distinct sanctuaries of God agreed, and wherein they differed ; and, in pursuing such an enquiry, we shall hope to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the future transactions of the Church in the *second* stage of her history, during the infidel period of fourteen years.

In an ecclesiastical point of view, it cannot be supposed that any essential difference is discover-

able between the two ; but that, as the same spirit harmonized equally in both, the temple only exhibited in this respect a fuller development of the Mosaic ritual than could be manifested in the tabernacle, not only from the comparative smallness of its dimensions, but also from the circumstance of the frequent journeyings of the children of Israel, which rendered it indispensable on such occasions to break up the tabernacle altogether, and to transport the various materials of which it was composed from place to place in a disjointed state.

For the above reasons, therefore, we are constrained to conclude, that no very distinguishing marks can be expected to exist between the tabernacle and temple, when compared the one with the other, as respects their internal ecclesiastical constitution ; but that such distinction between the two, if there be any, must be sought for independently and apart from their religious laws and ceremonies.

Now, it appears to us, that there are two important points plainly distinguishable between the two sanctuaries, and which, from their prominence, attract our particular attention :—

First—The temple, when compared with the tabernacle, conveys the idea of permanency and stability :

Secondly—The erection of the temple at Jerusalem, with its ample accommodations for the worship of other nations, intimates an enlargement of purpose which was only exhibited in the tabernacle in a figure.

The truth and force of these two distinctions are very obvious, and must strike the most inattentive observer, nor will they require any arguments by way of demonstration. The former of these two points of difference is a self-evident proposition: of the latter we would remark that, whilst it is true there was an outer court attached to the tabernacle, yet, from the peculiar position of the children of Israel—their constant journeyings in the wilderness, and their almost total seclusion from the other nations of the earth—such a provision for the worship of a foreign people, at that period of the history of the Jews, can scarcely be supposed to have any other object than that of indicating the future purpose to be thereafter displayed in the temple at Jerusalem, when the tribes should be fully established in the land of Canaan.

Thus, the simple ideas conveyed to the mind from these considerations are, that the temple—in contradistinction to the tabernacle—possessed a durability, and also an enlargement of purpose, as respects the other nations of the earth, which

the tabernacle, from the very nature of its construction, did not—neither, indeed, from its position in the wilderness, could possess.

Availing ourselves therefore of this information, thus derived from the study of the two symbols, and applying the light we have thereby acquired to the future career of the Church during the infidel period, we shall be led to infer, that in emerging from her wilderness condition (which we have seen is her *first* period of three years and a half), and entering upon her *second*, that the transition would be distinguished by the open manifestation, in some form or other, not only of her increased strength and stability, but also of a more enlarged purpose of grace and mercy as respects the nations of the world at large; and we need scarcely insist upon the strong corroboration such an opinion will receive, if we find it in perfect accordance with every other interpretation we have offered of this divine prophecy, and that it harmonises, not only with the prophecies of the Apocalypse, but with every other portion of the sacred writings which refers to the last days of the history of the Church.

If we combine these two symbols together—viz., the tabernacle which the Jews raised up in the wilderness, and the temple which they subsequently erected in Jerusalem—we are led to

infer, when the symbolic woman comes up out of the wilderness, that the spiritual tabernacle has been fully set up, and that the subsequent representation of the Church under the figure of the temple is introduced to signify that, having all the spiritual ministries then complete, she is no longer hidden in the seclusion of the wilderness ; but that, having in some degree recovered from the low and feeble state into which she fell after the translation of the saints, she emerges from her retirement, and once more boldly erects her head and is enabled to look her enemy, the serpent, in the face. But let us examine the prophecy a little more closely.

It is impossible to disconnect the prophecy which is contained in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation of St. John from the preceding chapter : the slightest attention to the machinery of the vision will convince the reader that the two chapters compose important and integral parts of one and the same prophecy. It must also be quite obvious that the action of the vision which is described in the tenth chapter must be considered as introductory of the prophecy which succeeds ; so that, in fact, the subsequent details in the vision are the contents of that "little book" which the seer is required to eat, in order, as we judge, that, by thus making its prophetic con-

tents his own, he may be thereby better qualified to “prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” This interpretation of the introductory portion of the vision acquires additional consistency when we reflect upon the nature and character of the subsequent transactions in which the Church, thus remodelled, is represented as taking an active part : for it will appear in the sequel, that, immediately consequent upon the measurement of the symbolic temple, a twofold form of witness proceeds forth of her bosom, whose history will be found to occupy the remaining two periods of three years and a half each.

It will not require very great discernment to perceive, that the important prophetic transactions symbolized in the tenth chapter of the Apocalypse, when regarded in reference to a future fulfilment, can apply only to one period in the great day of the Lord—viz., that appearance of Christ in the air when His glory will be enveloped in “a cloud,” thus shielding His presence from the gaze of the natural world ; and which, moreover, is the first initiative act of His taking possession of the habitable globe, and which act is symbolized in the prophecy by that mighty angel’s placing His right foot upon the sea and

His left foot upon the earth, in token of proprietorship. It is upon the occasion of this angel's descent to the region of the earth that the seven thunders of the last Vial of wrath are represented as uttering their voices ; and which, it is needless to observe, is in perfect accordance with the whole of our interpretations : so that this scene in the vision furnishes us with another important synchronism, by which we are enabled to confirm the truth of our other interpretations of the same action—viz., that it is at a very early period of the seventh Vial the Lord Himself makes His appearance in the air, and that during the pouring out of its contents, He, with the risen saints, are enveloped in the cloud of glory, out of which the latter alone proceed upon their missions, till the close of its judgments.

A reference to the latter part of the eleventh chapter will fully confirm this view of the prophecy ; for the events which are therein described as taking place, immediately the seventh angel sounds, are those which we have discovered from other prophecies are represented as occurring during the residence of Christ with the risen saints in the air, contemporaneous with the judgments of the seventh Vial of wrath ; nor can there be any doubt that the mystery of God referred to in

the tenth chapter of the Revelation and the seventh verse, as being finished when the seventh angel shall BEGIN to sound, indicates a more intelligible apprehension by the Church of the momentous phenomena of that great day of the Lord than she had hitherto received, and which, when given, is one of the surest pledges that the events themselves are even at the door.

We conclude, therefore, from the details of this remarkable vision, that the mystery of God, which in the prophecy is declared shall be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall BEGIN to sound, is none other than "those things" which were uttered by the seven last thunders, and which the seer, whilst in the act of addressing himself to his task of recording, was forbidden to write. And the reason wherefore he was commanded thus to repress the intelligence, which the seven thunders uttered, is obviously because that, in them, was contained the grand denouement of the Gentile Church ; so that, to write them, in the way of explanation, before the period had arrived for the fulfilment of the events themselves, would be to declare prematurely that mystery which, in conformity with all God's dispensations to man, He did not design should be fully understood until the eve of the *final and literal* accomplishment o

the prophecy ; at which time the Scriptures invariably lead us to expect God would more clearly reveal His ultimate purposes with the Gentile Church—the momentous events connected with the advent of Christ, and His inauguration into the possession of the kingdoms of this world. For this prophecy plainly states, that “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall BEGIN to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.”*

The action of giving the “little book” to the seer, who is thus made the type of those who shall be the future medium of communication between the mighty angel, Christ, and the peoples, nations, tongues, and kings still upon the earth after the appearance of Christ in the air—together with the prophetic standing the apostle is represented as taking in relation to “them that dwell upon the earth”—point with sufficient distinctness to that prophetic character of the Church, which we have already seen such good reason to conclude will be her first ministerial aspect when she receives her commission to testify to the other nations of the world. All God’s revelations to man are pleasant to the taste, though they prove

* Compare Rev. x. 4-7, with xi. 15 *et seq.*

oftentimes bitter in the belly ; and, if this be so as a general truth, how bitter to the experience of the Church must the *last* revelation prove to be which is burdened with that awful testimony to Christendom recorded in the following fearful terms?—"If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Rev. xiv. 9-11).

But, previously to this testimony proceeding to "the peoples, nations, tongues, and kings" of the earth, the seer is required to perform another symbolical action. He is instructed to measure with a reed which was given unto him, like unto a rod, the temple of God, and the "altar, and them that worship therein ;" whilst all those without the temple are counted wholly unworthy of being thus taken account of in the house of God, and are given over to the Gentiles to be

trodden under foot forty and two months, or, literally, three years and a half.

Now, though this period of time appears in the prophecy to have a more direct application to the treading under foot the outer court worshippers, yet it is indisputable that it must most especially refer to the chief action in the scene, which is clearly that of measuring the temple; for that which is true, as to time, of a subsidiary part of the vision, must of necessity be true also of the principal. So that we conclude the future transactions in the Church, whatever they may be, symbolized by the measurement of the temple, will extend over a literal period of three years and a half.

In offering an interpretation of this part of the vision, we adopt, fundamentally, the explanation given of these combined symbols by almost every commentator who has preceded us, though it will be found our application is different; as, indeed, must of necessity be the case, when almost all previous writers on prophecy have restricted their interpretations to the *past* fulfilment of the vision, whilst those we have to offer glance at the *future*.

We avail ourselves of the exposition of an erudite modern commentator,* and with him in-

* "*Hæc Apocalypsis*," by Rev. E. B. Elliott, A.M.

terpret the *παβδος*, or rod of civil authority, to signify the putting forth the civil power in aid of the Church, and which is the same truth we have extracted from the twelfth chapter ; wherein the symbolic earth is described as helping the woman, and preventing her from being carried away by the foul waters of that flood which the serpent cast out of his mouth. As respects the future, it is doubtless that act of the civil government which shall be put forth to authorize the ruling ministries in the Church to re-organize, or, as the author above referred to very happily expresses this symbolic action, to "*ecclesiastically constitute*" the Church ; or, if we might be allowed to suggest an improvement on the expression, to "*ecclesiastically re-constitute*" the Church ; seeing that it is not a new constitution which will then be given to her, but the revival and reformation of that which has been from the beginning. So that we have a twofold confirmation of the truth of our interpretation, that the wilderness state of the Church, during three years and a half, is linked to and immediately precedes the temple condition ; inasmuch as we arrive at this conclusion, not only from the obvious connection of the tabernacle with the temple in the Jewish ecclesiastical economy, but also because both prophecies contain, under very

different symbols, one and the same truth—viz., that this transition of the Church, from her wilderness into her temple state, is peculiarly marked by some act of the civil government, whose power is in the figure represented as being exercised for her protection : in the one case, this truth is symbolized by the stable earth opening her mouth and swallowing up the flood which the serpent cast out of his mouth ; and, in the other, by a rod of power being placed in the apostle's hand, wherewith he was directed to measure the temple of God.

Mr. Elliott contends that the whole of this part of the prophecy is applicable to the Reformation ; to which exposition, in respect of the past, there cannot exist any objection ; but, on the contrary, we think, there is little doubt but that it then received one of its preliminary fulfilments. But, if the symbols in this prophecy have been so nicely arranged by divine wisdom as to be capable of a consistent and well-sustained interpretation, when applied to the Reformation of the Church at that period, with how much more propriety and force may they be expected to describe that final Reformation of the Church, when Christ Himself shall suddenly come to His temple and sit therein as a refiner and purifier of silver—purifying the sons of Levi, and purging them as gold and silver,

that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness ? The former Reformation was but a partial cleansing of God's spiritual house ; and, alas ! has left little behind but the reformers' rough zeal against Popery without much of their catholicity of spirit, and still less of their spiritual discernment of truth ; but *that* Reformation which is still future will be conducted by the Master of the house Himself ; who, when His fan is once in His hand, will thoroughly purge his floor and gather His wheat into the garner, whilst He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

It thus appears that the reed, like unto a rod, which was placed in the apostle's hand, and with which he was charged to measure the temple of God and the altar, and them that worshipped therein, conveys the same truth, and refers to the same event in the history of the Church, that we discovered concealed under the symbol of the earth helping the woman : and thus both symbolic prophecies signify that the powers of the civil government will be extended at that period to help the Church in her extremity. But though both prophecies undoubtedly refer to the same era in the future history of the Church, the one emblem contains more information as respects the exercise of this power than the other : for, whilst, in

the former case, the figure only conveys the idea of protection from an impending evil, in the latter, we distinctly learn that this rod of power will be employed, ecclesiastically, in cleansing the spiritual temple of God from the defilement of false worshippers; and if we are to understand by the reed being placed in the hands of the apostle, that he, in the figure, was the representative of those in the spiritual Church who should be instrumental in that day in the performance of this act of discipline, then the prophecy distinctly points to those ruling ministries of the Church, to whom properly belongeth the exercise of all ecclesiastical rule and authority.

Our readers will remember that, following out our interpretation of the various symbols as presented to us in the twelfth chapter, we left the Church at the expiration of the first of these four periods of three years and a half in much disorder and confusion, arising out of her sudden investiture with spiritual power, and which we found strong reasons for concluding was of a prophetic character. Moreover, that experiencing the evils inseparable to all congregated bodies of men in the absence of all rule, it was reasonable to suppose, that an efficient ecclesiastical discipline would become an object of earnest desire to the distracted Church, and that the first step towards

the exercise of such an authority would be the concurrence of the civil power in her re-establishment as an ecclesiastical body.

The civil power, however, will prove to be but the outward casket which contains the spiritual gem ; for we mistake greatly if the ruling ministries in the Church in that day (and, consequently, all the subordinate ministries), do not derive their power from Christ through a more direct and immediate channel of communication than has been exhibited in the Church since the personal ministry of our Lord Himself : so that whilst the prophecy points to the civil government, under the several symbols of the "earth" and the "rod," it must be understood rather as indicative of sanction than as predictive of the exercise of any actual power in that future process of purification which the prophecy so plainly intimates the Church will have to pass through.

Now, the first feature in this symbolic action of the prophecy which strikes us most forcibly is, that whilst all who are within the sacred precincts of the temple are subjected to a rigorous measurement, all those who are in the outer court are considered as wholly unworthy of such care ; and, connecting this symbolical act with our interpretation of the woman's occupation in the wilderness—viz., the raising up a tabernacle for

God, we infer, that, upon the Church's emerging from her wilderness condition, the first exercise of spiritual rule in the house of God, *after the purification of the ministries*, will be the cleansing of the people themselves ; and, moreover, that in these acts of discipline they will be aided by the glorified saints, of whom it is expressly declared, that *then* shall *they* " return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." All the worldly-minded and the hypocritical—all ordinance worshippers and Church worshippers, in contradistinction to those who worship God in spirit and in truth—and all the unclean of every grade and class, shall be expelled from the spiritual temple of God ; and those only permitted to abide therein who worship God acceptably, and who offer themselves as a whole burnt offering, yielding up to Him the unreserved homage of their hearts and lives.

But we gather another equally important truth from the symbol—viz., that during that period of the history of the Church—the last fourteen years of the spiritual harvest—the true Church of Christ all over Christendom, shall have one, and but one form of worship, and that that form shall prove to be the spiritual antitype of the tabernacle and temple worship as exhibited in the Mosaic economy ; and, moreover, that all

who will not enter that spiritual temple shall be trodden under foot of men, even as Moab was trodden as straw for the dunghill. Every form of sectarian pride—and it exists where it is least suspected—all spiritual arrogancy wherever found and under whatever garb, shall be alike humbled in the dust in that great day of God Almighty; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in the Church as well as in the world. It shall then be seen that the words of St. Paul do not describe an Utopian and impracticable condition of the Church of Christ; but that the Church, even on the earth, shall exhibit to the world “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all” (Eph. iv. 5, 6).

If, therefore, the measurement of the temple indicates the putting forth such an efficient act of ecclesiastical discipline as we have attempted to describe, we cannot much err in concluding, that this second period of three years and a half, points to that era in the history of the Church when her own peculiar exigencies will demand, and receive, the strong hand of Christ's rule in the spiritual temple, symbolized, as we judge, by the face of the lion in the head of the cherubim; which animal, as the acknowledged king and lord of the forest and all untamed beasts, is an ap-

propriate and expressive emblem of that overpowering authority which shall then be exercised in the Church of Christ: so that, as we discovered from a study of the former prophecy, during the *first* of these four eras, Christ, as the Head, was supposed to be looking out upon His Church through the face of an eagle—the symbol of the prophet—He is here represented as looking upon her through the face of a lion—the emblem of lordly rule—fiercely opposed to all manner of iniquity, and, moreover, strong and relentless in the execution of its punishment. By the universal consent of all Christendom, the apostolic office is the ministry through which Christ administers rule in the Church; and we therefore conclude, that this second era in her history, during the fourteen years, will witness a revival of apostolic rule in the Church.

There are two prominent points observable in this portion of the prophecy which attract our particular attention :—

First: the description of worshippers who are subjected to this measurement of the apostle's rod, as well as those who are excluded from this act; and,

Secondly, the character of the judgment which falls on those who are not included in this symbolic measurement.

It is quite clear that the **whole** of this portion of the prophecy refers to the **Church**, and not to the nations of the world ; consequently, **the interpretation** also must have exclusive reference to the Church. .

There are three distinct objects which are represented in the figure as subjected to this apostolic rod of power—"the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein ;" by which enumeration we learn, that the *entire reconstruction* of the Church will be entrusted into the hands of that ruling ministry of which the apostle John in the vision must be regarded as the type and symbol : and, moreover, that all the various orders of the subordinate ministries, signified by "the altar," at which the priesthood, under the Mosaic economy, served, as well as the people themselves, will be subject to this act of spiritual discipline.

Indeed, it must be quite evident that none others can possibly be included in this category of spiritual worshippers ; for discipline can possess no efficient action, except upon those who are avowedly under, and acknowledge the legitimacy of the existing authority ; so that an outward obedience is the first preliminary step to a union between any ministry and the people.

Nor will this submission to spiritual authority

in the Church be found quite so easy a matter as some might suppose, even though the Church, according to our interpretation, will then be fully sensible of its absolute need, even to her very existence. That licence which has so long prevailed among men, miscalled *liberty*, has fostered a spirit which is wholly at variance with the exercise of any real authority; and it is quite conceivable that, when the stringent character of such authority is revealed, much resistance may be developed to its full establishment, which nothing but the most prompt and severe visitations of judgment may be able effectually to overcome. But these will not be lacking; for it is the hour of the purification of both the spiritual priesthood and the people—when Christ shall be revealed as the Purifier of His Church—when His “fan is in His hands, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire;” for it is the time of the great harvest of the Church as well as of the world.

But the submission which will then be required at the hands of the subordinate ministries of the Church, as well as the people, is not the blind and ignorant subjection of slaves: there is enough of that spirit already in the Church: it will be the enlightened, intelligent, and willing obe-

dience of spiritual men; for, whilst the former introduces all manner of uncleanness into the body, and is in itself destructive of the true dignity and power of the rulers themselves, the latter at once upholds and sustains the hands of those in authority, whilst it secures all the blessedness of God's discipline to the ruled.

Now, in order to ascertain, with any degree of certainty, the respective characters of these two classes of worshippers, we must refer to the general structure of the tabernacle and temple; for in this respect they both agreed.

The outer court, or court of the congregation, was the first enclosure of the entire building; and admission was obtained to it by four pillars which were placed at its entrance. In this court was erected the brazen altar and the laver, which signified the washing away of our sins in the waters of baptism. Within this outer court there was another enclosure, which, properly speaking, was the temple, to which access was given by five pillars; and in this inner enclosure was placed the golden candlestick, the table of shew-bread, and the golden altar; whereon incense was offered by Aaron, and which golden altar is doubtless referred to in the prophecy under consideration, inasmuch as the *brazen* altar was set up in the *outer* court, being a compartment of the entire temple which was *not* subjected

to measurement, but was given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot forty and two months. Beyond this, and encompassed within the same compartment, was the Holy of Holies, though separated from the other parts of the inner temple by a veil which hung suspended upon four other pillars, and so arranged as to preclude the eye of those who were ordinarily ministering at the golden altar from penetrating its sacred enclosure. Into this innermost recess of the temple the high priest alone entered once every year, yet not without blood to make an atonement for the nation. In the Holy of Holies was deposited the golden censer, the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the two tables of the covenant; and so much for the general description of the interior arrangements of both the tabernacle and the temple. It is, however, with the first two of these three compartments within the entire building with which our vision has to do.

With this division of the interior of the temple before us, it must be very evident that those who passed the five pillars which were supposed to guard the second entrance, and who thus came under the illumination of the golden candlestick with its seven lights, and who possessed privilege of access into that compartment which contained the shew-bread and the golden altar, alone enjoyed

any nearness of approach to the holiest of all, where the Shekinah rested on the ark of God, and which represented the immediate presence of the Deity; whilst those in the outer court, composed of a mixed congregation, worshipped afar off. Nor does it require any violent transition from the symbol to the spiritual truth thereby signified, to discover that those who worship within the temple describe such as worship God in spirit and in truth; whilst those who are represented in the outer court point with equal precision to that far more numerous class of persons who have a form of godliness without the power, and who are satisfied with a nominal profession of Christianity and an outward and lifeless observance of the ordinances of the Church, instead of penetrating into the inner veil, and thus become possessors of the spiritual realities of which all these are but the outward accessaries.

Now, it is expressly declared in this prophecy, that in those days these two classes shall no more continue together, but that they shall be divided; that the tares shall not any longer grow up with the wheat, but that a separation shall then take place between the two: for it must be observed that the outer court worshippers have an outward semblance of the truth. The figure will not admit of the supposition that the prophecy is

intended to describe those who either deny God altogether, or even refuse Him outward acts of worship; for they are found *within* the *exterior* enclosure of the temple, which implies a voluntary entrance into its sacred precincts with the avowed object of yielding to God their homage. But, just as these outer court worshippers in the Jewish temple did not enter the heart of the sanctuary, or attain a near approach to the presence of God, so the formalists—these ordinance worshippers in the spiritual temple described in the prophecy—do not penetrate the heart of God's truth, or enjoy spiritual communion with Him, or fellowship with His dear Son; but content themselves with a cold and listless conformity to the ordinary requirements of the Church, and deem all higher and more spiritual attainments as works of supererogation, and quite needless even as regards their individual safety.

The fact that the outer enclosure was of much larger dimensions than the inner is not without a significant meaning, and plainly intimates that in the spiritual temple of Christ's Church as in the literal temple of the Jews, but a small space, comparatively, would always enclose the truly spiritually-minded in either dispensation. Let us not, therefore, be charged with bringing

accusations against the Church whilst, as interpreters of prophecy, we reiterate the conviction so often and so unequivocally declared in this publication, that the substitution of the outward ordinances of the Church for the spiritual worship of God, and the unreserved devotion of the heart to Him, is far more prevalent among modern professors of religion than the self-love of the Church will allow her to admit. We are loud and vehement in our protests against the senseless and impious idolatries in the Papacy, and treat with merited scorn the worship of the Virgin ; and whilst, perhaps, our protestations themselves have been more angry than holy, we have forgotten that, in our turn, *we* may have become guilty of another form of idolatry, and worshipped the Church of which the Virgin is but an emblem. We say not that it is so : we merely suggest the enquiry, if there is really much difference in the sight of a pure and holy God between a frail woman and the mere outward ordinances of the Church when either are substituted for God himself ? It is quite possible that the Reformation itself—glorious as doubtless that work was—might become an object of idolatry, and Protestants themselves Sectarians ; nor is the feverish uneasiness which is so universally manifested even at the mention of such a suspicion any

strong evidence that there is no reality in the danger.

God knows, we do not write in any spirit of accusation, but in true sorrow of heart, when we record our conviction that many of us will discover, when it is too late to ensure an entrance into the marriage supper of the Lamb, that we have been building our house upon the sands, and resting our hopes upon a broken reed; for the hope that does not rest exclusively, alone, and indivisibly upon God Himself, shall utterly perish in that day, when Christ is revealed as the Trier of the reins and Searcher of the hearts of the children of men.

Now, when that spiritual tabernacle is fully erected, and is not any longer hidden from the eyes of men by being embosomed in the Church of one nation, but is raised into a spiritual temple perceivable by all; and when, moreover, the way of entrance into that temple is made plain to the nations of all Christendom, then those who occupy the outer court shall be taken no account of among the worshippers of God. Neither will any worship be acceptable which is not offered up within the spiritual precincts of *that* temple, for the time will then have passed when God may have winked at what have been regarded as non-essential differences in the Church; but *then*

He will require that perfect unity which has always been acknowledged as one of the fundamental principles of the Christian Church, though hitherto never realized, except, perhaps, a few short years after the day of Pentecost, and consequently such an opinion has been held more as a theory than as an object of hope and attainment.

If any man cherishes in that day strong prejudices and predilections in favour of his own particular section in the Catholic body, and holds those peculiarities with more pertinacity than the truth itself, that temple cannot contain him : he may, perhaps, pass the barrier of the four exterior pillars, and thus find himself among the outer court worshippers ; but he cannot pass the five which guard the entrance into the inner temple of God ; nor, had he entrance, could he maintain any place within that spiritual region ; for no sectarian or schismatic spirit can abide there. The secretly covetous and the lovers of this world, like Ananias and Sapphira, may find an entrance through the outer barriers of the Church, but may not press within the inner circle ; for the light that burns in that sanctuary will discover the hidden secrets of the heart, and expose the double-minded to the gaze of the spiritual worshippers of God. Those only who, by feeding on

the true bread of heaven, are one with Christ, even as He is one with the Father—the true spiritual priesthood of God—shall have right of access to that table, which bears the outward symbol of the mystical, but, nevertheless, substantial, though spiritual union of Christ with the members of His body. Nor will any incense of praise or prayer be acceptable in that day which is not offered to God from a pure heart upon the golden altar which faces the holiest of all, wherein He Himself abides. The smell even of the flesh shall not any longer be endured in the sanctuary of God, but all must be holy, even to the pots in the Lord's house: for those that have the rule there have eyes of fire, and can “discern between the righteous and the wicked—between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” No jealousies or envyings, no dissensions or contentions about place or dignity, no evil surmisings or suspicions, no murmurings or whisperings, no backbiting or any uncharitableness, no spiritual pride or any selfishness, no sectarian exclusiveness, bigotry, or ignorance, can breathe in that pure atmosphere which alone sustains the existence of the heavenly graces of love, and peace, and holy joy. Nothing that defileth or maketh a lie shall enter and abide within that holy sanctuary.

It is almost impossible to pass by this branch

of our subject without contrasting the glowing picture we have described with the present painful aspect of the visible Church of Christ. To whatever portion of the Catholic body our attention is directed, and whichever section the eye rests upon, the same sad spectacle presents itself to view, without scarcely any perceptible difference, in the most advanced and enlightened parts of the entire community. The love of power, and in too many instances even the love of money, has eaten, like a canker, into the spiritual life of the Church, thereby producing disputes and contentions for place, emolument, or dignity, among her ministries, utterly destructive of every bond of union and love; whilst it is too well known, and now openly acknowledged, that the builders in the Church are at variance among themselves as to the ultimate design of the great Master-builder. Perplexity and darkness alike pervade the councils of all, and no man affects to know whither the next step may conduct the Church. The light of prophecy has been extinguished—that light which, had it been nourished, might have shed its lustre upon her present dark and gloomy path; or, if it exists, emits only flickering sparks of fire, which tells too truly of a brighter day gone by. The warmth of heavenly love—the life-blood of the Church—

lingers but upon a few sad hearts, who hide the dove-like bird within the secret of their own breasts, afraid to let her loose, lest she should never return again ; or, if exposed to the air, chilled by the surrounding atmosphere, drop and perish at their feet. Dry and lifeless forms of truth and endless repetition (alas ! that such gold should ever be enclosed in any outward casket, however beautiful) meet us at every turn, and all but extinguish the motions of God's Spirit within, which, though it may take a form, is not that of man's devising. External conformity and monotonous routine are become the substitutes for the life and power of God ; and the formal people are content to have it so—smiling at the chains which fetter their spirits, and which bid the pulse and life-blood of the heart throb and flow within the compass of man's dull machinery : and thus the Church has become, like Lazarus of old, just risen from the dead, possessing indeed life, but bound hand and foot in grave-clothes, utterly incapable of advance, and scarcely possessing power of motion. But the voice of Him who holdeth the keys of life and death, and who alone hath power to bind and unloose, approaches nearer than the lethargic Church supposes, and ere long that mandate will be issued to the trammelled Church—Loose her, and let

her go ; when shaking off, as Sampson did of old, the cords which fetter her, she shall arise as a giant refreshed with new wine, rejoicing to run the race set before her, when that latter rain descends which shall fill the ear for the coming harvest : but what secrets of the human heart will that day reveal ?—what crumbling into powder of the inventions of man ?—what crushing ruin shall overtake, as in “one hour,” the stately edifice raised by successive ages ? Yet the temple of God shall be built of lively stones, and the four cherubim, with their four faces each, shall be delivered out of the cold and chilling death of nature, though it be in the whirlwind of the seventh Vial of wrath. But the calf must be first broken to pieces and ground to powder before the spiritual tabernacle can be raised.

Were we not apprehensive of entering upon too large a field of enquiry, it would not be difficult to show that the spiritual tabernacle and temple, in its antitypical manifestation in the Christian dispensation, will be composed of all the ministries that ever existed in the Church, brought out in the latter days ; and so appropriately ordered and arranged as to become the living expression of those truths which were contained only in type in the Jewish economy. If this be so, it follows, in order that such a spiritual house may be com-

plete in all its parts and proportions, that that day must of necessity witness the development of many ministries which the Church does not now possess ; otherwise it might be inferred, which is wholly inadmissable, that there were *some* of those ministries originally instituted which were only needful to the Church in her infancy, and utterly useless for perfecting her growth into the stature of a full grown man in Christ—a sentiment so irreconcilable to common sense as well as opposed to the uniform character of God's dealings with mankind, as revealed in His word, as to render any arguments, with the view of refuting such a supposition, quite unnecessary. God destroys nothing that He has made ; nor does He annul any of His institutions, except for the purpose of more perfectly developing the same truth in a more complete and comprehensive form : not that the tabernacle, though wholly composed of men standing in ministries, will not therefore include the whole Church ; for these ministries are the representatives of the body who appear in them ; just as the separate members of the seven Churches in Asia are obviously included in the epistles addressed to the individual angels of each respective Church (Rev. ii. iii.)

The second division of our subject presents to our consideration the peculiar character of that,

judgment which is said in the prophecy to be inflicted on that class of persons denominated the outer court worshippers ; and here, in order to ascertain the precise form of that judicial neglect, which the terms of the prophecy convey, we must closely examine the true meaning of the figure by which it is expressed.

The vision informs us that "the court which is without the temple," shall be left out of this measurement ; or rather, to adopt the marginal reading, shall be "cast out ;" "for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

Now, it must be quite evident that this figure applies to the action of the apostolic measurement only negatively ; and that, in respect to this act of spiritual supervision, it implies, simply, the utter neglect of all fostering care, such as the apostle symbolically bestows upon the interior parts of the temple. But the consequences of this slighting omission are, to adhere for the present to the letter of the symbol, that the court which is without the (inner) temple is *cast out*, and trodden under foot of the Gentiles ; or, in other words, the exterior wall which divided those *within* the outer court from those altogether *without* the enclosure is cast down ; so that the occupiers of this first compartment of the entire

building were thereby mingled with the other inhabitants of the city, and all distinction between the two classes thus completely destroyed : so much so, that the events which happened to the one class of persons must, of necessity, happen to the other.

With the above interpretation of the combined symbols, the figure scarcely requires explanation ; inasmuch as it so obviously signifies, that in that day when God shall raise up this spiritual temple, the distinction which now so palpably exists between " professors " of religion and " non-professors " shall be utterly destroyed ; so that the hypocrisy of the former shall no longer be covered by a decent outward performance of the ordinary routine of religious duties, but stand, divested of this flimsy covering, with all their naked deformity openly exposed to view. The cheat will then have been detected, and all pretext for sustaining a delusion, which, perhaps, only deceived themselves, for ever abandoned. The hollow professor of a religion, the power of which he never really felt, will then commit, perhaps, the first honest act of his spiritual career, and openly return to that world from which, in spirit, he was never truly separated.

To revert again to the symbol : the figure then supposes that such outer court worshippers are

exposed to all the penalties and judgments which afflict the rest of the inhabitants of the city, and are not protected from their infliction by the outer walls of the temple, but are trodden under foot of the Gentiles, to whom the city is supposed to be given for the space of forty and two months, or, literally, three years and a half—that is, during the time when the measurement “of the temple, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” is proceeding.

In order to discover what particular judgment in the spiritual Church of Christ the prophecy points to, thus represented in the symbol as happening in common to the inhabitants of the city and these outer court worshippers, it will be necessary to institute some enquiry, as to the relation which the act of giving the holy city to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, has to the peculiar hope of the Jewish nation; and from thence trace, if practicable, the analogy which exists between the symbol and the spiritual truth thereby signified in the future history of the Church of Christ.

The grand hope of the Jewish nation, doubtless, was the coming of Messiah as a great conqueror and king; at whose advent the Jews supposed their nation would become the dominant power on the earth, and Jerusalem, the holy

city, the metropolis of the world. It will be almost needless to add that they were not mistaken in the general character of their expectations, but only as to the period of their accomplishment; and that, in the eagerness of their desires to see this great result, they overlooked another great truth—viz., that Christ must needs *first* suffer, and *then* to enter upon His glory. It would thus appear that the abandonment of the holy city of Jerusalem (to which the first dominion among the other nations of the earth was promised in the Scripture prophecies) to be trodden under foot of the Gentile nations, presented to the Jewish nation the extreme opposite of the blessing for which they so ardently hoped and prayed; so that it is almost impossible to conceive anything so utterly degrading to the literal Israel as the supposition that their own peculiar nation, instead of becoming the ruling power on earth, should themselves be subject to the conquering arm of the Gentile nations; for whom, as is well known, they entertained the utmost contempt and aversion. Indeed, their singular position as the peculiar people of God, prohibited by express divine command from intermixing with the other nations of the earth, fully justified their high national pretensions, and doubtless inspired them with a *prestige* of their

importance in the future purposes of God, and their own glory as a nation, thus distinguished by such indisputable tokens of divine favour.

To tell a Jew, therefore, that the holy city itself should become the spoil of the conqueror, was, in fact, to announce to him in plain and significant language that God had forsaken his favoured people, by destroying all expectations of the immediate realization of those promises which the nation had so long and so ardently anticipated. Such an idea to the Jew was death to his hopes—judgment instead of salvation—and the unmistakable token of the lost favour of God. So that, as the Gentile nations may with propriety be termed the natural enemies of the Jews, there can be no doubt but that Satan is to be regarded as the immediate enemy of the Church of Christ, which truth is obviously alluded to in the original curse pronounced against Satan in the serpent; for Christ, as the Head of His spiritual Church, is therein evidently placed as the great personal antagonist of the devil—“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel”—of which prediction, as regards the seed of the woman, which is Christ bruising the serpent’s head, and the serpent bruising his heel, we would observe in passing, that the last infidel Antichrist is evidently alluded

to in the one case—viz., the serpent's head, who shall be utterly overwhelmed with destruction at the appearing of the Lord, and signified in the prophecy by the bruising of the serpent's head, because it is the seat of life; whilst the bruising of the heel of the woman's seed refers to that deadly struggle for mastery and the falling away of so many, which Satan will maintain in the Church in the last days of her history, appropriately expressed by the symbol of the heel, which, whilst it is one of the smallest points, is also situated at the extremest end of the human body, and therefore represents in the figure the heel of the Church, when Satan, for the space of three years and a half, shall appear to triumph over her. Let us now turn from the symbol, and contemplate the analogous spiritual reality in the Church of Christ.

Now, what is the hope of the Christian Church? We answer—not the expectation of an earthly kingdom but a heavenly one: even to be filled with the Spirit of God—to sit with Christ Himself in the heavenly places—and to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, whose house are we if we abide faithful in the hope of our calling—to be all instinct with the divine life—to be the inheritance, and, at the same time, to inherit God: to wield, with Christ, not only the spiritual yet substantial sceptre of this world, but of all worlds—

yea, the universe of God : all things, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth, visible or invisible ; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : for all things were made by and for Christ ; and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. All things are our. And what is the converse of such a dazzling immortality ? What the reverse of this glowing picture ? Can the depths of the creation of God possibly exhibit its opposite and adverse analogy ? Is there an abyss so immeasurably low that it can present its corresponding awful antithesis ? Can the universe, though the handy-work of an infinite mind, present two such extreme antagonistic points ? It can—it does ; for the outer circle of creation touches two opposites, though those opposites meet again in one concentric point—at once the extremities and the concentration of creative power. They are for ever apart, and yet meet in man—the one exhibited in men filled with the Holy Ghost, and the other in men inhabited by the spirit of the devil. Can even the power of God effect more ? Is not the one the perfection of all created good ? Is not the other the completion of all created evil ?—and for ever separate—for the deepest damnation of hell consists in the fiat, that no repentance can ever enter the bosoms of its doomed inhabitants.

If the highest purposes of God towards the creature are manifested—as without doubt is and will be ever the case—in the spiritual Christian Church, and not in any dispensation which has preceded or shall hereafter be given, then it is indispensable to maintain, in order to preserve the consistency of this high standing of the Church, that within the circle of that divine economy, and in that mystical body alone, should be developed the loftiest form of truth—that is, such parts of divine truth which are capable of expression through and by the creature : for there must be a point somewhere, in the relative connexion between the Creator and the creature, where the intelligence and apprehension of the creature as respects God must of necessity cease ; because God is essentially infinite and illimitable, and the creature is essentially finite and limitable. Nevertheless, the nearest approach to the Creator will be effected, and ever exhibited throughout the universe, in the mystical members of Christ's body, who are united to Him, as the Head, by a close and indissoluble bond which no other portion of creation can ever expect to possess.

If, therefore, the highest object of hope addressed to the Jewish nation, and its extreme opposite, is to be regarded as the symbol contained in this prophecy ; and, moreover, is to be

considered as pointing to the most exalted privileges in the spiritual Church, and its corresponding adverse extremity, then the figure of the outer court worshippers trodden down of the Gentiles, by being mingled with the inhabitants of the holy city would signify—when the interpretation is applied to the spiritual Church—that those worshippers who formerly pressed within the outer wall of the spiritual temple, and crowded its court, but who had the form of godliness only without its power, would be given over equally with the avowed infidel, or open blasphemer, to the possession of those evil spirits, who, in the last days, shall proceed forth out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

We cannot discover any other interpretation to this prophecy, even if the symbols by which it is expressed are studied (as they always should be), quite apart and independent of all other expositions of Scripture; but when such an interpretation coincides with and supports others which are derived from different sources, and the whole combined, presents a uniform and consistent series of prophetic events, exhibiting without either effort or strain one harmonious whole, we think it will be difficult to resist conviction of its truth.

We have already assigned good grounds for the conclusion, that the first of these four periods of three years and a half each, and which occurs, according to our interpretation, immediately consequent upon the appearance of Christ in the air and the translation of the saints, is a prophetic aspect of the Church, symbolized by the eagle upon which the woman flies into the wilderness, by which we understand the outpouring of that spirit of prophecy upon the Church then on earth spoken of in Scripture as the latter rain : or, to adopt another figure, the baptism by fire. So that the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost must be regarded as the early rain and as the baptism of the Holy Ghost ; * in contradistinction to that descent of the same Spirit at the period referred to, which would then constitute, in respect to these expressions, the latter rain ; or, baptism by fire.

It is, therefore, in perfect conformity with the whole series of these interpretations of the future history of the Church to suppose, that the unfaithful and hypocritical professors of religion should be exposed to the influx of those unclean spirits which the Scriptures testify in so many places shall be let loose upon the Church

* Compare Matt. iii. 11, with Acts i. 5, 8, ii. 4, x. 45, and xi. 15.

and the world in the latter days : not to insist upon what, however, we believe to be an indisputable fact, that such characters will be more accessible to these diabolical agencies, and more susceptible to their infernal power, than ordinary men ; if only upon the principle of their assuming a superior standing over others who may not have put forth similar pretensions. Thus that spiritual conflict, which our interpretation supposes, will take place during the *first* of these four eras of time, between the Holy Ghost in men on the one hand, and the spirits of devils in men on the other, will be carried into the second of these four periods ; with this difference, however, that whereas in the former instance the Church, being unprotected by her ordinances when in her wilderness condition, and by reason also of her weak and doubtless partially unclean state, will be exposed to these spiritual assaults of her great enemy without the shielding power of the ministries in the Church ; in the latter, the temple of God will be built, which shall serve as a covert and tabernacle from the storm.

We cannot refrain from again adverting to the extraordinary peril to which the Church will be exposed from diabolical supernatural power at that period of her history. Her present high pretensions, whilst at the same time she was

never more ignorant of the true nature and character of all spiritual gifts—not only from their disuse, but from her absolute denial of their existence as at all needful to the well-being of the Church—peculiarly disqualifies her for the reception of the powers of the Holy Ghost. Weak and exhausted, humbled and dejected, dismantled of all meretricious claims—her wounds yet unhealed—the victim of self-reproach and bitter remorse, and just emerged, moreover, from a condition of interminable divisions and prejudices—the Church, thus shattered and enfeebled, will become at once the arena and the object of the fiercest conflict between both good and evil spirits: for, it must not be forgotten that if this is the period for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, spoken of as the latter rain, it is also the period when Satan, with his hosts of fallen angels, having been cast out of heaven, cometh down to the earth, “having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time”—that most fearful epoch, when the spirits of devils, like frogs, shall go forth out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The Church, in the depth of such distress, will doubtless eagerly grasp at any object of hope, which holds out the expectation of recovery from her desperate condition. But there will be danger to

apprehend in that sudden revulsion of her feelings. Ah ! that rush—the rash hasting of the still rebellious flesh—Uzza’s hand stretched forth to stay the ark of God ! The eager embracement of that which has been before despised—there is peril in that carnal zeal and unchecked ardour—and many will fall victims to their own undisciplined impetuosity ! Oh ! for sobriety now—Oh ! for quietness of spirit now—for the enemy will rush in like a flood when the spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against Him*. “ He that believeth shall not make haste.”

It is not very difficult also to anticipate a snare, which Satan may spread for the feet of the Church at the present time, as respects this peculiar hope and expectation ; as though this outpouring of the Spirit were a *preparation* for the first appearing of the Lord in the air at the commencement of the seventh Vial of wrath, instead of being that refreshment and strength to the Church left on the earth, and which, like the latter rain, will fill up the ear just previous to the harvest of the Church ; which harvest will be reaped *contemporaneously with the pouring out of the seventh Vial, and through its tribulations and troubles*. We cannot but regard this opinion with some distrust, and the more so because such a

* Compare Isaiah lix. 19 with Rev. xii. 15.

notion does not preclude the hope of the near appearance of the Lord ; but rather substitutes an event beforehand, the notoriety of which, were it to occur in the Church, would utterly destroy the sudden character of Christ's coming as a thief in the night. Independently of this consideration, it will readily be admitted at least, as a doctrine of truth, that no event ought to be expected to intervene as of necessity occurring between the present time and the revelation of the Lord ; but, if it be contended that the latter rain is to come *first*, in order to *prepare* the Church for her translation, then such an expectation cannot fail to destroy the hope of the Lord's appearance on any day, and at any hour, *until that event has taken place*. We are quite aware of all the arguments that may be advanced in support of a contrary view to that we have just expressed, but are quite prepared to meet them, and, as we think, to neutralize their power. Among others, it is contended, that the Church is not yet in a condition to receive her Lord, and that she needeth the outpouring of the latter rain to prepare her for that glorious vision. And this argument seems to acquire force by a reference to the seventh and fourteenth chapters of the Apocalypse, wherein the hundred and forty and four thousand, who stand with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, are represented as having their Father's seal in their foreheads,

and *this* sealing is supposed to be, in some way or other, connected with the out-pouring of the Spirit in the latter days, though how, and in what manner, we know not ; except, indeed, it be because the same word occurs Ephesians i. 13, and elsewhere in the new Testament, in connection with the gift of the Holy Ghost ; and therefore it is inferred the Father's name, written upon the foreheads of the hundred and forty and four thousand, must signify the outpouring of the latter rain in the last days.

We have already elsewhere fully given our interpretation of that symbolic act of sealing, as described in the seventh and fourteenth chapters of the Apocalypse, and, therefore, we have not any occasion now to repeat our arguments in support of that exposition, but to which we refer our readers.* We will, however, venture to throw out a hint for the consideration of those who may be directing their expectations to such an event occurring *before* the appearance of the Lord ; and observe that the former rain—that is, the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost—could not be shed forth, as Christ Himself informs us, until He ascended into heaven ; for He said, “ It is expedient for you that I go away ; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto

you ; but if I depart I will send him unto you" (John xvi. 7). And accordingly we find that, not many days after His ascension, the Holy Ghost *was* sent down from heaven. We do not say that the historical part of this transaction *does* ; but we submit it to the discernment of our readers, if these events *may* not typically point to the time of the latter rain in the future history of the Christian Church ? And if so, the type would therefore signify, that not many days after the first appearance of Christ in the air, and the translation of the living saints, the latter rain should descend upon the distracted and disordered Church, then left upon the earth, to comfort and console them in their first moments of agony and disappointment. It is quite evident, without laying undue stress upon the typical analogy we have suggested, that the outpouring of the Holy Ghost as the latter rain, or the baptism by fire, shed forth on the Church left on the earth, after the translation of the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, is not a mere supposition, sustained only by a typical analogy ; but is plainly deducible, as we have already shown, from the prophecies of the Book of the Revelation, presenting a consecutive and consistent series of interpretations drawn from an extraordinary combination of various symbols, which do not occur

to the same extent, and in like manner, in any other portion of the Scripture prophecies ; and, therefore, we consider we may safely and legitimately avail ourselves of any type we may discover, as further illustrative and confirmatory of such an exposition. Let us, however, guard ourselves from any misapprehension and misconstruction ; and, therefore we add, that we do not contend that the ascension of the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb into the cloud of glory is absolutely needful to the descent of the latter rain ; far less do we mean that that outpouring of spiritual power comes directly from them, or that their presence in heaven is necessary to this heavenly gift (though, in truth, the risen saints may possibly have more to do with its administration to the Church then on the earth than we at present imagine) ; but we submit that the historical transaction, as respects the time, manner, and object of the outpouring of the early rain on the day of Pentecost *may* prefigure that of the latter rain—that is, as respects the Christian Church ; for it is quite obvious, from all the prophecies, this promise, as regards the Jewish nation and the world at large during the Millennium, will not be identical in its fulfilment either as to circumstance or place ; as, indeed, of necessity, must be the case, from the dif-

ferent conditions of the recipients themselves as well as the specific objects for which this heavenly gift is bestowed upon them.

Not having any doubt upon own minds upon this very important subject, we venture to throw out these suggestions for the consideration of those whose expectations may now be addressed to such a hope ; and, at the same time, take occasion to express our own firm conviction, that the latter rain to the Christian Church will *succeed*, and not *precede*, the actual coming of the Lord and the change of the saints ; and that the sealing of the hundred and forty and four thousand, who are represented as escaping the judgments and seen with the Lamb upon Mount Zion, is not the *effect* of the spiritual blessedness of the latter rain, but rather that this symbol points to an individual sealing of the Father's name of Love upon the foreheads of a certain number who are selected from the Church, and who will, in consequence, become the subjects of that change from mortality into immortality, alluded to by St. Paul, as taking place on the instant of the Lord's appearance in the air at the commencement of the seventh Vial of wrath.

We are far, however, from denying that the object of the outpouring of the latter rain in the last days is for the purpose of purifying the

Church, or that its specific object is the preparation of a people for the coming of the Lord—that is, the making ready the bride, and arraying her in white apparel for her marriage with the Lamb: on the contrary, we believe that such is undoubtedly the case. But let us again remind our readers that the first fruits—those, in fact, who are represented under this symbol as being translated at the *commencement* of the seventh Vial—are not the harvest, though they compose a part of the whole: and though they are alike in kind, yet that this difference subsists between the two (without entering now upon the enquiry, whether any other difference will exist), that the former class of persons will be translated and *invisibly* translated *before*, or rather *at* the *commencement* of the judgments of the seventh Vial; whereas, the latter will be *visibly* translated at its *termination*—the one company being prepared by individual purification in various ways *before* the general judgments which are even now coming upon the earth—the other by passing through their fiery ordeal.

From such a system of interpretation it must be quite obvious that both classes of the redeemed—viz., those signified by the first fruits, as well as those symbolised by the harvest—have each to pass through similar experiences, and that the

hopes of either company are equally sustained by the eventual appearance of the Lord for their separate deliverance—the one receiving *their* glorious bodies on the occasion of the descent of the Lord into the region of the air, when Satan is cast out from thence to this earth ; and the other receiving *theirs* just previous to the descent of Christ to this terraqueous globe, when His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, and which, consequently, would immediately precede the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and the binding of Satan a thousand years.

We confess it appears to us that, independently of the obvious evil arising from the substitution of an event necessarily to occur before the actual appearance of the Lord, and which, though spiritual, and it may be invisible to the naked eye, would be nevertheless cognizable to the Church at large—that such a notion is calculated to draw off the attention of the Church from individual purification of the heart, from all fleshly and spiritual uncleannesses, to an outward gift, to be miraculously conferred by God upon the Church, which the members of the body have only to receive by faith, in order to be qualified for their translation—and which, moreover, it is scarcely reasonable to suppose they would have the power

of rejecting; and thus the waiting people of God may be in danger of having their attention directed to the occurrence of some outward phenomena in the Church, and forgetting that great truth that he that hath the hope of the coming of the Lord purifieth himself, even as God is pure. The Church can become purified and perfected only by the purification and perfection of her individual members. *All* reformation must begin at the heart before it can be manifested in an outward form; for the latter, in the absence of the former, is hypocrisy, and can only aggravate the Church's condemnation. It is doubtless in order to show out this spiritual truth that the Jews were required to purify themselves beforehand when any new dispensation of grace was vouchsafed the nation; and these acts of purification were especially enjoined when the children of Israel approached Mount Sinai, and God was about to manifest more openly His personal glory to them.

We shall now proceed to consider another very important point which this portion of the apostle's vision suggests—viz., the unity and catholicity which the temple, as a symbol, implies the Church will exhibit to the whole world in the last days.

The propriety of adopting the emblem of the

temple in this second phase of the Church's history, during the infidel period, is obvious, inasmuch as the transition from the tabernacle to the temple condition of the Church is not only in strict keeping with the original history, but the substitution of the latter for the former appears intended to inform us that she has then come up out of her wilderness state, and once more erects her front before the nations of the earth. This portion of the prophecy evidently represents the Church in her temple, and not in her tabernacle form—that is, hidden within the bosom of a single nation. Let us, therefore, briefly contemplate that glorious superstructure which Solomon erected for the worship of God, and which was the wonder of the world during the bright days of Israel's prosperity and enjoyment of God's favour; for our prescribed limits preclude the possibility of much enlargement, and we must therefore restrict ourselves to one or two observations of a general character.

When the Jewish temple was completed there existed no other temple in the world where God could be properly worshipped, except such places as were dependent on, and subsidiary to, the temple itself. It is also equally clear that that temple was open to receive the worship of all the nations of the earth, had they been disposed to

offer their homage to the one living and true God.* This restriction, and yet at the same time liberty, as respects man's approach to God, implies unity combined with catholicity, and which purposes of God were thus shown forth in type in the Jewish nation, notwithstanding the exclusive character of their national position, and doubtless pointed to a future period when both these principles of truth should be brought out into full operation—first, in the spiritual Church of Christ in the latter days of her history, and afterwards in the Jewish nation at their final restoration.

For it is quite a mistaken notion to suppose that because the Jews were a separate nation, and as such pre-eminently distinguished by the favour of God, that therefore they were intended to be a nation of sectarians—an error which the Jews themselves, it is true, in their pride and self-sufficiency, ultimately fell into, but from which our Lord, during His personal ministrations on earth, unceasingly laboured to deliver them. The object of God in thus constituting a peculiar people the only depositary of His oracles, was not for the purpose of hiding the knowledge of Himself from all the other nations of the world, but rather that of directing their attention,

* *Vide Acts ii. 5-12 ; also the corresponding passages.*

by the open manifestation of His own glory as exhibited in that nation, to the ONLY true record of His mind and will. This purpose is evidently declared in the provision of no inconsiderable space both in the tabernacle and the temple for such as should come up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord of Hosts, and of which privilege it is quite clear many *did* avail themselves.

Indeed, as respects this unity in worship, it may be observed that two forms which essentially differ in themselves cannot be alike equally good; the one must have, in some one respect, precedence over the other. A thing is either right or wrong: and though there are, without doubt, modifications of evil as well as good, and God may have suffered a variety of sections to spring up in the Church, by which He has protected certain portions of truth, yet this is not God's way, though He has succeeded in thus preserving, in the totality, the unity of His truth in the Catholic body—not, indeed, by the aid of, but in spite of, the divisions and sectarianism which abound throughout the whole. But this device of God for the preservation of His truth, even in the midst of a divided Church, by which He (who doeth all things well) has been able to extract good out of evil, is no argument in favour of a disunited Church, upon whose frontlets, on the

contrary, should be written **UNITY** : for, *diversity* is not *contrariety*, and has nothing to do with negatives in the way of opposites. Diversity exists in the persons of the Godhead, yet perfect and undivided unity withal.

If our apprehension of the meaning of this symbol of the temple be correct, then this prophecy points to a period in the history of the spiritual Church of Christ in the latter days, when God Himself (as He did of old to the Jewish nation*), will, as we judge, through the instrumentality of the risen saints from the cloud of glory, give forth by direct divine authority the true form of worshipping Him in the spiritual temple ; out of which temple, or its appendages throughout Christendom, God will not then be found.

We are well aware of the practical difficulties which may be urged in opposition to the accomplishment of such a purpose ; but those obstacles to the establishment of such unity (not uniformity) in the Church vanish like smoke before the wind, or melt as snow before an Indian sun, if our conceptions of the experience of the Church close at hand be true. For the appalling fact of being shut out from the marriage supper of the

* Vide the preceding number of the Retrospect, No. XII.

Lamb, with the knowledge that the Church has to encounter at once the fearful judgments of the seventh Vial of wrath, and the diabolical spiritual temptations which during its infliction will beset her path on all hands, will utterly destroy every high and lofty look, and break the pride of every carnal imagination in man's heart : for God will in that day touch the fleshly sinew of the Church's strength, and humble her even to the dust of the earth ; so that she will indeed need the refreshing showers of the latter rain to revive her drooping spirit—the oil of the Holy Ghost to be poured upon her to heal and solace her wounded and bleeding heart. The fructifying showers of the latter rain are chiefly beneficial to the mown grass ; the oil of comfort and consolation to a bruised and broken spirit : and the Church at large will shortly find that she has yet to be more deeply humbled, before God can build her into a spiritual temple, or she can be entrusted with that power which the subsequent parts of the prophecy now under consideration expressly declares she shall yet possess in the latter days of her history. The Catholic Church shall yet exhibit upon the earth one body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all ; and, moreover, the Lord shall be worshipped by all who worship Him acceptably,

in perfect unity of act and form ; though doubtless exhibiting in that unity a diversity both of gifts and manifestations.

But there is another important feature in the aspect of the Church in those days which the right interpretation of the symbol suggests—viz., the catholicity of the heart of the Church towards all the baptized throughout Christendom. Every baptized man will have right of entrance into that temple. We do not affirm that every baptized man will enter within its sacred precincts ; the universal testimony of the Scripture prophecies conduct us to a very different conclusion ; but that entrance within that sanctuary will be the spiritual birthright of all upon whom the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost have been pronounced in that holy sacrament.

This period, therefore, must be considered as contemporaneous with the preaching of the Gospel by the three angels, who are represented in the fourteenth chapter as seen flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel in their hands, declaring, at one and the same time, that the judgments of God have come, and yet that there is still mercy to be found with Him, if men will repent, even in the day of their calamity.

The objects of the testimony of the Church will

then be twofold—denouncement of the pretensions of the personal infidel Antichrist, and the preparation of all believers for the descent of the true Christ of God from the region of the air to this terraqueous globe, to take possession of the purchased inheritance which He has bought with His own most precious blood. Hence the fearful conflict, both in the Church and in the world, between Christ and Antichrist—between the powers of heaven on the one hand, and the powers of hell on the other; and that final struggle will continue till the termination of the seventh Vial, at the closing of which Antichrist will appear to have obtained the victory, by establishing his undisputed sway over the whole world; except, indeed, within the precincts of the spiritual sanctuary, for the members of Christ's body shall resist him, even unto the death, and overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb; and in consequence of which fidelity, for the space of three years and a half, they will be called on to seal their testimony with their own blood; for it is permitted the beast that ascendeth up out of the bottomless pit to slay for this period the witnesses of God. This is the period when the serpent shall succeed in bruising the heel of the woman's seed—that is, the last remnant of the Church then left on the earth—the extremity

of the mystical body of Christ. But he shall not ultimately triumph, for the saints of God shall be caught up to heaven, and their enemies shall behold the glory of that translation. Then utter destruction shall come upon them in a moment, and Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon all the nations who know not God, and who have rejected his offers of grace and mercy. Then, after the tribulation—the great one—the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall withdraw her light and be confounded by the brightness of His glory who shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven, causing all the inhabitants of the earth to wail because the hour of their final judgment is come.

It will be well for us all to examine the foundations of our faith, and the rock upon which our expectations are built of being included in that glorious company of first fruits, who shall be translated into the cloud of glory at the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: for if the phenomenon, with all its glorious and stupendous results, is not very different, and perhaps, even contrary to the general anticipations of the Church, it will prove to be the first important event on record in the history of the Church and the world, which has ever been accurately foreseen by any considerable class of persons; not

even excepting those who ostensibly are professing to await Christ's speedy appearing: for we must not forget that our Lord declared in the parable—"But those who were FIRST bidden should not taste of His Supper." A general expectation was prevalent among the Jewish nation of the coming of Messiah upon the occasion of our Lord's first advent; and yet we have only the record of Simoen and Anna who, by an intelligent faith, received the lowly-born infant. And so little was our Saviour's true character apprehended during the earlier period of His life, that even John the Baptist, who was His forerunner, sent to enquire of Him, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Nor is there sufficient unity among any section of the Catholic Church, of the existence of which we are aware, that would justify the conclusion that that particular portion forms an exception to the general rule. For the truth cannot be too strongly impressed upon our minds, that the sudden translation of the living saints at the appearing of the Lord is a change which *then* passes only upon a *part* of the whole man; since those who will become its subjects must have had their spirits with their affections in heaven before—sitting already with Christ in the heavenly places—their lives hidden with Christ in God. The world, there-

fore, with all its corrupt affections, cannot have any hold upon the bodies of these denizens of heaven, who, loosened from all its ties, will ascend—thus buoyant with immortal life—into the presence of the Father of the spiritual world. Deliverance from the power and influence of the world *now*, and walking with God in the Spirit *here*, is the surest pledge of being lifted up out of the great tribulation of the last days. Reader ! Is this a hard saying ? It may be so ; but be assured it will prove to be a true one, and that he who now loveth the world shall in that day inherit the world and its doom, as surely as he that loveth God shall inherit God, and then enter into possession of all the supernatural glories of the age to come ; and he who hath made the world the object of his choice *now* cannot complain if he find himself included in its fate *hereafter*.

If we are not much mistaken in our apprehension of the general character of the Scripture prophecies as respects the last days, more than the suspicion is engendered that God is about to turn from a people who have too long drawn near to Him with their mouths, and honoured Him with their lips only, to a people who will serve Him with something more than hollow profession, and a mere outward conformity to the requirements of the Church. The word of God

expressly declares that the professing Church of Christ in the latter days shall have A FORM OF GODLINESS WITHOUT THE POWER, and that her most holy assemblies and feasts shall be as a stink in the nostrils of Him who requireth truth in the inward parts. Alas! the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked—who can know it? Its sinuosities and subtle wickedness are beyond all human detection. With our own debts to a heavenly judge, either unliquidated or just forgiven, we sieze in spirit our brethren by the throat, and demand payment of the uttermost farthing, forgetting that Christ, the meek and lowly one, ever lived as our example, or admonished us by His precepts, how we should follow in His steps—thus transposing the spiritual essence of the Gospel into the strict letter of the law. We pray for fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and yet stoutly resist and rebel against those trials through which alone that sympathy can be produced. We apparently earnestly seek conformity to Christ's image, and oneness with Him, and yet deliberately turn from the only path which can conduct us to the attainment of this unity. We ordain fasts and appoint days of humiliation before God for the acknowledgment of our sins; and, whilst the breath of confession has scarcely died away from our lips, we are

ready to deny the existence of the sins which we have just confessed with our tongues—yea, almost ready to turn and rend the man who ventures to allude to their substantial and personal reality. But, if our vision is not clouded with some strange and fearful delusion—our spiritual conceptions wholly warped, and our apprehensions too deeply tinged with the dark and gloomy aspect of the times in which we live—there is a day immediately at hand when it shall not be needful to ordain fasts and acts of outward humiliation, or to issue forms of prayer in aid of the reluctant piety of the people; but it shall prove to be a day wherein the lofty look and scornful pride both of the Church and the nation shall be laid low, and their honour trampled in the dust of the earth: a day when there shall be a great mourning in the spiritual Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. THEN shall the land truly mourn—not with loud and tutored lamentations, ascending in regular cadence from well filled churches—for, in that day, every family shall mourn apart; the family of the spiritual house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

yea, *all* THE FAMILIES THAT REMAIN, every family apart, and their wives apart—a fast, when all shall seek to hide their agony in the secret recesses of their own chambers, and every man shall smite upon his own breast in the depth of woe and bitterness of spirit. Then a lamentation shall be heard, piercing the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth, who will send forth from the cloud of glory the refreshing showers of the latter rain, and pour down, through the risen saints, heavenly consolation to heal the bleeding wounds of a truly broken-hearted Church. But, now, prepare thyself, O daughter of Jerusalem ; array thyself in sackcloth, cover thy proud head with ashes, and sit in the dust ; for the days of thy rejoicings are ended, and the days of thy mourning and widowhood are near.

But, who are these two witnesses who issue from the temple, and, though clothed in sackcloth, yet appear invested with such power and honour ? Who are these that can thus stand before the God of all the earth ?

THE RETROSPECT.

No. XIV.

There is a natural propensity in man which exposes him to the continual temptation of directing his faith to, and fixing his hopes upon, that which is visible and tangible to the senses, instead of to, and upon, the invisible realities of the spiritual world. Nor is the force of this observation much diminished by such expectations being more immediately directed towards some phenomenon which it is anticipated may be developed in the Church of Christ: the principle is the same, though the objects upon which it acts may be different. The whole world is sustained upon hope, and it is a part of the essence of a man's being that he should live upon hope: he is born in hope and he dies in hope, and he passes through his long and wearis-

some pilgrimage supported throughout its various meanderings by a constant succession of hopes. It is unquestionably a stage advanced in the right direction when a man's expectations are centered in the Church rather than upon the world; but he will have certainly attained a far higher standard when his heart is found concentrated upon God Himself, rather than upon the manner and character of His dispensations to man; for the Church—that is, as respects her outward and visible manifestation—is but the accident of the truth, and not its essence: God alone is THE TRUTH, and the Church, in its highest and most spiritual form, is but the outward expression of those infinite perfections which are essentially and eternally existent in the Godhead.

It follows from these premises, which we think are indisputable, that whilst the Church should ever exercise an intelligent and lively faith, and possess a "quick understanding" (*scent*) in the knowledge of God's ways, both as respects her own career and the world at large, yet that she should always regard both *these* but as accessories to the truth and not as the truth itself; and when contemplating them, either as displays of God's divine majesty and power, or as indications of His future purposes with either,

her thoughts and affections should be rather fixed on God Himself than upon any manifestations of His power or acts.

It is quite possible, for example, to exercise a certain degree of faith, and even much acumen, in the development of the unfulfilled prophecies of Scripture, and yet to be very far removed from a truly spiritual union with God, or enjoy any deep entrance into the divine mind and purpose. If an interpreter of prophecy confine himself to the mere unfolding of future events hereafter to be manifested, either in the political or natural world, he is but a fortune-teller of the Church, since all these outward developments can only be contemplated as the manifestation of those attributes of the divinity, into the fellowship of which all the mystical members of the body of Christ are invited to enter with their Head.

When our Lord, in His memorable discourse with Nicodemus, placed the new birth—that is, spiritual regeneration by the Holy Ghost—in the category of “earthly things,” it must not be supposed He was using an indefinite expression by way of illustration, but that He enunciated an eternal principle of truth, and one which it was most needful a ruler in Israel should fully understand, inasmuch as the commencement of His ministry on earth was the sign that the Holy Ghost

was about to be given ; and doubtless He intended to intimate that all the operations of that Spirit in the Church should be ever regarded as among the “earthly things,” in contradistinction to the “heavenly things” which should be hereafter.

The procession of the Third Person in the ever blessed Trinity from the Father and the Son, and who, though equal in the Godhead with the Father and the Son, yet, nevertheless, condescends to act subordinately in the Church on earth, is the great truth conveyed in our Lord’s distinction between the “earthly” and the “heavenly things :” as it is written—“For when He (that is, the Comforter which is), the Spirit of truth, shall come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (John xvi. 13); and again—“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME” (John xv. 26). So that it would appear, that if the spiritual regeneration of men, which is the direct operation of the Holy Ghost (John iii. 5, *et seq.*), is placed by Christ among the “earthly things,” that all other operations of the same Spirit in the Church on earth are likewise

to be so regarded ; not as arising out of any inferiority of the acting Person in the Trinity, but (comparatively inferior) as respects the operation itself, when contemplated in connection with a higher and more heavenly state of the Church at a future period, to be more fully developed in the age to come.

The Comforter, therefore, in the present condition of the Church, is the great testifier to Christ, as the “everlasting Father” of the spiritual age to come—the introducer of the “heavenly things” to the Church and the world—the giver and sustainer of all spiritual life ; and, moreover, as THE SANCTIFIER, carrying out the will of the Father and the Son, He prepares the children, thus begotten, for their entrance with their Head into the heavenly places themselves.

If these things are so, then it is quite obvious that *all* the operations of the Holy Ghost in the Church are only a means to an end, and that the end is the manifestation of the glory of God in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ at His appearing and kingdom ; and, consequently, that to concentrate the heart, hopes, and affections of the Church upon any past or future operations of the Holy Spirit, *to the forgetfulness of the hope of Christ's coming*, is virtually to substitute an earthly for a heavenly hope, and to

relapse, in spirit, into an earthly state. Thus the distinction between the spiritually-minded and the carnally-minded becomes apparent—the hopes and affections of the former being fixed on the **END**, whilst those of the latter are wholly absorbed in the **MEANS**: the eyes of the one being directed to the heavens—those everlasting hills from whence cometh our help; the eyes of the other on the Church in the earth, watching for the outward manifestation of the hidden purposes of God: the one class walking in light—the other in doubt and darkness that may be felt.

Faith, as defined by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, is not a thing of easy acquirement or of ordinary possession, and doubtless is far more rare in the Church than most of us feel disposed to acknowledge. True faith is “the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen;” but we, perhaps, unconsciously grasp eagerly at every expedient which holds out the slightest prospect of rendering this high attainment less difficult: thus, an easy path is prepared for the substitution of any expectation which has the effect of postponing indefinitely the instant coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, more especially if the anticipated phenomenon relieves the Church from all responsibility of its development: nor can we altogether conceal our

apprehensions that some outward act of preparation may now be looked for by the waiting people of God, which may have the effect of diverting the attention of the Church from the preparation of the heart to some outward, though it may be spiritual phenomenon, which may prove in the end rather to have reference to the Church left on the earth than to that company of first fruits who shall be changed from mortality into immortality—suddenly, as in the twinkling of an eye—when Christ shall be first revealed as a thief in the night. The Church cannot complain if she reaps what she has sown, or be surprised if she realizes only that which she has hoped and expected; for, we believe, in that day, it will be given every man according to his faith. Let not any of our readers feel offended at these observations, though possibly they may seem at variance with fondly-cherished hopes; for we write in love to all men, and especially to the household of faith: but we must hasten on with our interpretations.

The full re-establishment of the Church, and the purification of the ministries and the people, symbolized in the prophecy by the temple and its measurement by the apostolic rod, as well as the altar, and them that worship within the inner temple, prepares us for the next action contained

in the vision, which we find is descriptive of a two-fold form of witness that shall then proceed forth of the bosom of the spiritual Church to the Christian nations of the earth. The prophecy in the apocalyptic vision is as follows :—

“ And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sack-cloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies ; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy : and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

There are three different interpretations which have been offered of this prophecy of the two witnesses, as is well known to all students of prophecy. It has been supposed that the symbol signifies either two resurrection men—that is, men who have already passed into the immortal and glorified state, and who will again visit this earth, and stand as witnesses before God ; or that the figure points to two distinct Christian Churches, from whose bosoms respectively a

similar testimony is to proceed ; or that it refers to the two written records of the divine mind as contained in the Old and New Testament Scriptures, and which, as they comprise the full purposes of God, are supposed to be the only competent witnesses in this last scene of the history of the Gentile Church.

As controverting the opinions of others is not our immediate object, we shall not occupy the reader's attention by attempting to show wherein these interpretations would seem partially to accord with the prophecy itself, and wherein, as we judge, they present any points of incongruity ; but we shall proceed at once to offer our own views of this mystery, and leave the reconciliation of these various expositions to the reader's own discernment—not, however, before we have ventured upon a remark in reference to *one* of these interpretations, simply because, without further argument, we think it is fatal to its soundness—that is, supposing, which we believe to be the case, that, by two Churches, two Christian Churches are meant, in the Catholic sense of the term.

There is only *one* Church ; and, though man may have made divisions in the one Catholic body, the Scriptures do not afford us the slightest indication for the supposition that God even

recognizes, far less sanctions, such distinctions, except, indeed, it be in the way of bringing good out of evil. It is true the whole body is divided into two classes—viz., those who are spiritually alive and those who are spiritually dead; but, whilst we adopt the language of men by way of distinguishing the one class from the other, and term the one “the invisible,” and the other “the visible Church,” or the “true and the false Church,” we must ever bear in mind that *every* apostate one in the Church, without attaching any conventional meaning to the term, will be judged, because he has departed and apostatized from the one Catholic and apostolic faith once delivered to the saints: so that we feel justified in rejecting any interpretation of this prophecy which supposes the existence of two Churches at one and the same time, as utterly repugnant to the mind of God, and directly opposed to the spiritual constitution of the Church herself.

It is an axiom that all truth is inherent in God, from whom alone it can proceed as from its eternal and inexhaustible source. Jesus Christ is “**THE TRUTH**,” because He came forth from God, and was the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His person: but truth, like every other attribute of the Deity, is essentially invisible, and only takes a form when any of His

perfections have to be developed in and to the creature.

There are two indispensable requisites needful to constitute a witness—the one that his testimony should affect another and not himself; and the other that a witness, to be efficient, must be full and complete.

The law, as respects witnesses, as laid down in the Levitical code, and which determines two to be a complete testimony (see Deut. xvii. 6), was not an arbitrary enactment as respected numbers, resting solely upon the fiat of God, without reference to the development of any principle of truth, but was constituted law in the Jewish nation, because it was the purpose of God in the fulness of time THUS TO WITNESS to His own invisible and incomprehensible Godhead: and it was for this reason that the testimony of two witnesses was determined to be a complete and full evidence, first, in the Mosaic law, and subsequently interwoven with the judicial codes of most Christian nations.

Accordingly, we find this principle of a two-fold witness more fully developed in the spiritual Church of Christ, than it could possibly be in the carnal ordinances given to the Jewish nation; because it is a spiritual truth, and consequently could only be fully brought out in a spiritual dispensation.

This double and complete testimony is continually referred to by our Lord as existing in the persons of the Godhead ; and, as we shall see in the sequel, is set forth as constituting also a perfect witness in the Church from the beginning, of which spiritual truth the two witnesses, in the symbolic prophecy now under consideration, are the final development in the present dispensation, when the Church shall be exposed to the trials and persecutions of the triumvirate of evil in the last days.

Our Lord Himself repeatedly referred to the witness of the Father and the Holy Ghost in support of the truth of His own mission ; and, though it is true that He alluded also to Himself and the works which He did as bearing witness of Him, yet, upon one occasion, aware that the letter of the Mosaic law would be urged against Him if He testified of Himself, He adds, " If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true " (John v. 31). The witness of the Father to the Son is thus recorded :—" And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased " (Matt. iii. 17). Again : upon the occasion of the transfiguration of our Lord, it is recorded, " While He yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them : and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased : hear ye him."

And there is no doubt it is to these, and other similar testimonies to the Sonship of Christ, our Lord referred when He said, "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me" (John v. 37). Our Lord also refers to the witness of the Holy Ghost in the following terms :—"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John xv. 26). Again: the Son and the Holy Ghost witness of the Father—the Son witnessing to the Father, and the Holy Ghost witnessing to the Son, that He is the only true and faithful witness of the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him*" (John i. 18). In perfect conformity with which announcement of our Lord's mission, He Himself afterwards affirms, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*" (John xvii. 26). And the Holy Ghost testifies, through St. Paul, that Christ was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person.

It is equally clear from the inspired writings, that the spiritual Church of Christ also contains a twofold form of witness. In our Lord's discourse upon the descent of the Holy Ghost, as

recorded in the fifteenth chapter of John's Gospel, the following declaration occurs:—"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me: **AND YE ALSO SHALL BEAR WITNESS**, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John xv. 26, 27).

In the above quotation it is quite evident our Lord makes a distinction between the witness of the Comforter and the witness of His disciples, which He speaks of as two separate and distinct things. Now, as it is equally clear that the Holy Ghost testified in and through men—that is, by the tongue of man—it follows that we must discover *both* these forms of witnesses in living men in the Church. This important truth was obviously well understood by the first apostles who, on the occasion of being brought before the council at Jerusalem, after boldly testifying that God had raised up that same Jesus whom the rulers and chief priests of Judah had slain and hung upon a tree, and exalted to be a Prince and Saviour at the right hand of God, declared, "**we** are His witnesses of these things, and *so is ALSO* the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts v. 32). But if we examine the history more clearly, we think, we shall dis-

cover that the gift of the Holy Ghost is almost invariably associated in the early Church with witnessing to Christ.

After our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and before His ascension, it is recorded by St. Luke that He addressed the following words to His disciples—"And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven" (Luke xxiv. 48-51).

Another conversation is detailed by the same evangelist, and recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, wherein it appears that Christ, being assembled together with the disciples, "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, ~~saith~~ *He*, ye have heard of me : for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they, therefore, were come together they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the

times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth " (Acts i. 4-8).

Now, it is quite obvious that the doctrinal truth taught in these passages of Scripture is, that the witness of the disciples to Christ alone, and without the second witness of the Holy Ghost, was an *imperfect* witness; and, therefore, the disciples were ordered to tarry at Jerusalem, and suspend their testimony of Him until this power had descended UPON THEM; which expression evidently implies that this second witness of the Holy Ghost would be expressed THROUGH THEM; though the two kinds of testimony would be developed with such a marked difference, that the one should be easily distinguished from the other, so as to constitute two separate and distinct witnesses, though uttered by the same tongue.

In perfect obedience, therefore, to this mandate, we find the apostles and disciples *did* remain at Jerusalem; and, what then took place? We answer, a perfect manifestation of this two-fold form of witness, signified, as we judge, by the cloven tongues like as of fire which appeared and sat upon each of them; for the immediate

results of that outpouring of the Spirit upon the apostles was not only that they "began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," but that Peter, standing up with the other eleven, lifted up his voice and largely discoursed to the men of Judea, in their vernacular tongue, *through* and *to* the understanding; explaining to them the meaning of the wonderful occurrence which had just taken place and had occasioned them so much astonishment.

We are quite aware it is generally supposed that the cloven tongues only symbolized that diversity of languages testified to, by the numerous foreigners then resident at Jerusalem, as proceeding from the apostles on that occasion; but it is clear to us that this interpretation of the symbol substitutes a part for the whole of the truth; inasmuch as the figure distinctly points to a *twofold* form of witness; whereas the speaking with tongues, as the Spirit gave the apostles utterance, was only *one* form.

The separate and distinct character of these two witnesses—though it may be, as was clearly the case with the first apostles, both kinds might be manifested through one and the same person—is made manifest from the fact that whilst, in the one case, the understanding of a man was in full exercise and his reasoning powers at full

liberty, in the other he could speak **ONLY** as the Spirit gave him utterance; thereby proving that, when giving forth this form of testimony, his spirit was under the immediate impulse of the Holy Ghost in a manner, and to a degree, to which he was *not* subject when speaking by his understanding, though even every word he then uttered might be pure truth suggested to his mind by the same Spirit: an instance of which is recorded in Acts iv. 8, and which is as follows:—“Then Peter, **FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST**, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel;” and then immediately proceeds a discourse from the apostle’s understanding, in contradistinction to spiritual utterance by the power of the Holy Ghost.

It is very evident that this double witness was so universally recognized and understood in the primitive Church that it was needless the apostle should set it forth as a doctrine to be accredited by her members; for words of doctrine rather have relation to a thing which is absent than to that which is present. We arrive at this conclusion by observing the conventional terms in which this duplex testimony is alluded to in all the apostolic writings, of which we quote the following as examples:—

“Now there were in the Church, that was at

Antioch, certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **THE HOLY GHOST SAID**, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia ; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts xiii. 1-4). Again : in the letter which the apostles and elders sent to the Gentile brethren in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, concerning the matter of their circumcision, the following words occur :— " For it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost, **AND TO US**, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things" (Acts xv. 28). Nor can any reasonable doubt be entertained but that it was by the combined means of these two distinct and separate yet united media, through which Christ, as the Head, at first governed His Church upon earth : indeed, we are not aware that there are any scriptural grounds for the conclusion that the Holy Ghost *ever* spake otherwise than through men, which would appear to set forth the glorious and elevating truth,

that man is the proper temple of the Spirit of God.

The necessity for this *second* testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Church arises out of the principle, that spiritual truth is too large and comprehensive to be adequately expressed by any powers which a finite being can possibly possess ; and, therefore, the *extraordinary*, as well as (what may be termed by way of distinction) the *ordinary* operations of the Holy Ghost is the spiritual birth-right of every man who is baptized into the Church of Christ, whose privilege alone it is to sit with Christ in the heavenly places. Nor do the examples of the Jewish prophets, who were all at times under the extraordinary supernatural operation of the Spirit, furnish any argument against the truth of this conclusion, since it is quite obvious that these instances in the Jewish dispensation constituted the *exception* and not the *rule*, for these inspired men were thus acted upon only for specific and occasional objects ; nor was the possession of the Holy Ghost their inherent right as Jews, for the Holy Ghost was not then given as a dispensation of God to man.

This definition is not an attempt to draw out of a subtle truth a distinction without a difference, for it is an eternal verity stamped upon the very constitution of man's being, though only deve-

loped in its full and complete form in the spiritual Church of Christ. It is a truth which has its origin in God Himself, and appears in man, because man is created in the image of the invisible God, whose likeness to the Creator is neither a poetical fiction or a figure of speech, but a spiritual yet substantial reality; in virtue of which, Christ, and the mystical members of His body, will stand in the age to come before the whole intelligent creation of God as the perfect outward expression of the attributes of the invisible and incomprehensible Godhead.

Now, if this two-fold and therefore complete witness in the Church of Christ be that duplex testimony which proceeds from her bosom by the operations of the Holy Ghost, through and by the understanding and spirit of man, then is it quite obvious that the Church for many centuries past, as a Catholic body, has existed without this double and perfect testimony to her absent Lord; and we judge that the prophecy now under consideration, under the symbol of the two witnesses proceeding forth of the temple, intimates that, in the last days of her history, this two-fold witness will be again revived in more than its original power and glory: so that the closing act of the Church will be the perfect development of her character as a witness for God; and it will be

scarcely necessary to point out to the reader's attention how perfectly consistent such a view is with the whole of our interpretations of the history of the Church during the closing days of the present dispensation.

It would not, perhaps, be very difficult to show that this interpretation of the symbol of the two witnesses, of the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, is not wholly irreconcilable with the expositions of this prophecy to which we have already alluded: for, if we substitute ministries for persons, and regard the Jewish and Christian economies, as in fact they are, two distinct and separate ecclesiastical dispensations to man, of which the Old and New Testament respectively are the scriptural canons, then it will appear evident that *all* these expositions contain the germ of the truth for which we now contend, inasmuch as the Christian Church is, without doubt, founded upon the two ministries of apostles and prophets (Eph. ii. 20); and the Old and New Testament Scriptures may each with propriety be regarded as two separate and distinct testimonies, the one to the carnal ordinances of the Jew, the other to that higher and more spiritual dispensation of the Church of Christ—the former being more especially addressed to the mind or intellect of man, whilst the latter has more direct relation

to his spirit: the difference being that whilst, as it appears to us, *our* interpretation contains the generic spiritual truth, those alluded to are various forms of its outward development. But let us proceed to examine how far the symbols in the prophecy itself will sustain such an exposition.

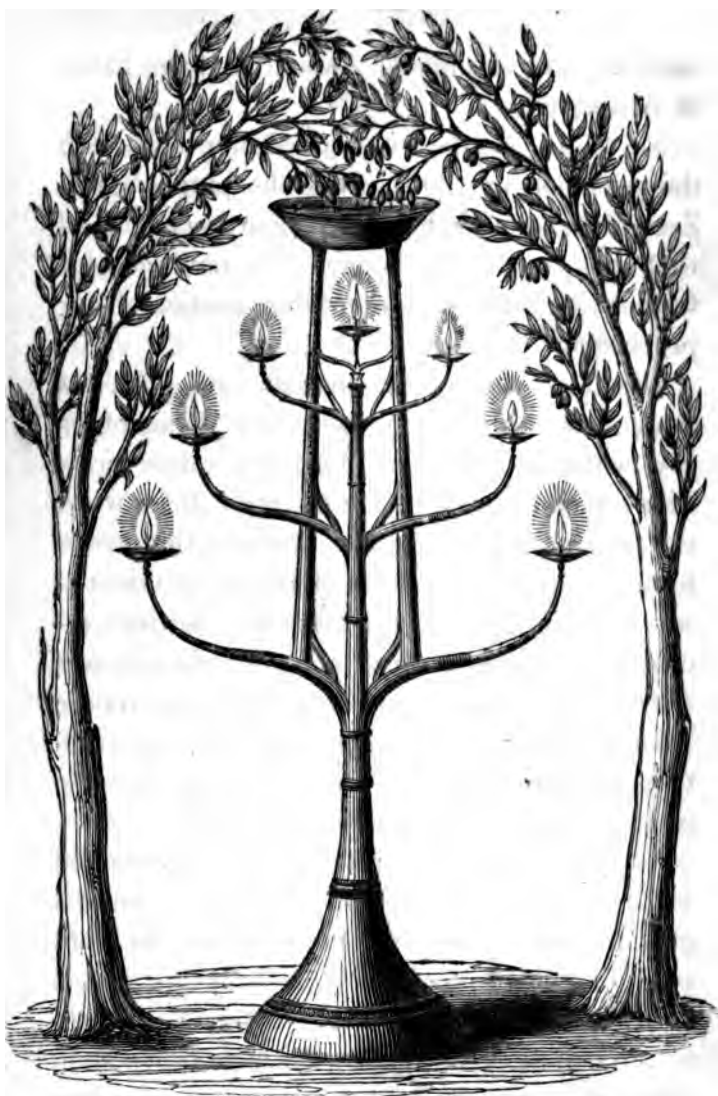
We find, on referring to the prophecy, that these two witnesses are said to be, "the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth:" and if, as we think in the sequel will prove to be the case, the symbol of the olive trees is intended to signify the Holy Ghost as the inexhaustible source and supplier of all divine light in the Church, and the two candlesticks which contained the light symbolize those ministries that instruct the Church through the understanding—that is, those within the enclosure of the inner veil of God's sanctuary—then both these symbols would seem to point to the same truth to which we have already adverted, and are in perfect consistency with our interpretation of the symbolic prophecy of the two witnesses—viz., that this portion of the vision is intended to represent a twofold form of testimony which in those days shall proceed from the bosom of the Church to the nations of Christendom before the final catastrophe of the seventh Vial, and the

destruction of the infidel Antichrist at the battle of Armageddon.

No doubt can be entertained but that both these symbols are taken from the prophecies of Zechariah, as recorded in the fourth chapter of that book, to which, therefore, we now refer for further light upon this interesting portion of our prophecy.

Now, the prophet Zechariah saw only *one* candlestick in the vision ; whereas it is said of the two witnesses that they were *two* candlesticks. This difference would seem to imply that, when the vision was given to the prophet, the *second* form of witness—viz., that of the Holy Ghost—was not then given in the form of a distinct ecclesiastical dispensation to man ; but, the spiritual dispensation having commenced when the apostle John wrote, it was as consonant with the truth that he should see *two* candlesticks as that the prophet Zechariah should see only *one*.

In the vision, two olive trees are represented to be standing, the one on the right hand of a golden candlestick and the other on the left, pouring golden oil from their branches into a bowl, which communicated its contents directly to two main golden pipes ; to which two golden pipes were attached seven other several pipes (see marginal reading), through which seven



**A REPRESENTATION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK WHICH THE
PROPHET ZECHARIAH SAW. (ZECH. IV.)**

[Vide page 230, vol. iii.]

subsidiary pipes the oil is supposed to be conveyed to the seven lamps. We are justified in the conclusion that these seven minor pipes were not of gold, from the omission of this adjective in the description ; whereas it is expressly said of the candlestick itself, and the two pipes which were directly connected with the bowl that contained the oil, that *these* were of gold. The expression applied to these two golden pipes is also very remarkable, if we adopt the marginal reading ; for the original, translated "through" in the text, is there rendered "BY THE HAND OF," which would seem to imply, irrespectively of any argument arising out of the interpretation of the symbol itself, that these pipes signified men in a ministry—the hand, as an emblem, being always significant of man's active agency.

The simple idea which a pipe or tube conveys to the mind is, that it is a conductor ; and we should naturally attach this meaning to the symbol, even did not the prophecy expressly inform us, through the attendant angel, that this was the design of these two sets of pipes in the symbolic vision given to the prophet ; so that the combined figure which was presented to Zechariah was that of two olive trees pouring oil into a bowl, which discharged its contents into two main golden pipes, from which seven minor

pipes communicated the oil to the seven lamps.*

It is indisputable that oil is the emblem of the Holy Ghost in His manifestation in and through man, and consequently the olive tree, which produces the oil, and in the figure signifies its origin and source, must mean the Holy Ghost Himself. We learn also from the vision which preceded, as well as from the seven epistles themselves addressed by our Lord to the seven Churches in Asia, recorded in the first three chapters of the Apocalypse, that the candlestick

* Some think that this symbolic vision of the golden candlestick represents the oil from the branches of the two olive trees as dropping, first, into the two golden pipes, which then empty themselves into the bowl; so that the oil would be, on such an explanation of the figure, communicated from the bowl to the seven several pipes, and not, as we have supposed, directly from the two golden pipes: but either arrangement of the symbol alike conducts us to the same interpretation, the spirit of which is, that the vision presents two distinct and separate sets of pipes, and that the risen and glorified saints, who are symbolized by the two golden pipes, receive directly the oil of the Holy Ghost, and then convey it in the figure to the seven several pipes, or Church on earth. Nor does it in the least degree affect our explanation of the prophecy, whether the bowl, as in the one case, first receives the oil; or whether, as in the other, the two *golden pipes* are its first receptacle; since both views of the original figure agree that the two pipes receive the oil *before*, and as a means whereby it is communicated to, the subsidiary pipes, and through these to the lamps in the candlestick. The bowl in either case doubtless signifies—*containing ministries*.

is the proper symbol of a Church. Combining, therefore, these interpretations of the two symbols together, the explanation of the two sets of pipes as conductors is very simple and easy, and obviously and explicitly points to two different classes of persons, through whom the Holy Ghost will be administered to the Church at the time to which the prophecy refers, and which period, as we shall presently see, is plainly enough intimated in the same vision.

By the two golden pipes we clearly understand the risen and glorified saints, who are represented in the figure as communicating directly with the bowl which contains the golden oil, through which alone the oil was conveyed to the seven minor pipes which were attached to the seven lamps; and the combined figure obviously indicates that that company of risen and glorified saints, who are elsewhere symbolized as the hundred and forty and four thousand standing with the Lamb upon the Mount Zion, will be the administrators of the Holy Ghost to the Church on earth when Christ Himself shall be hidden in the cloud of glory in the heavens.

The propriety and beauty of symbolizing the risen and glorified saints in the heavens, thus used as communicators of the Holy Ghost to the Church then upon the earth, by two golden

pipes, and neither more or less, is very apparent, inasmuch as they will be the perfect example of that twofold form of witness which we maintain the visible Church will exhibit to the world in the last days; and communicates, moreover, the consolatory assurance that the risen saints will then hold intercourse with men in the flesh, as our Lord Himself did after His resurrection and before His ascension—viz., through and to the understanding of man, as well as in the power of the Spirit, accompanying their more familiar instructions, as the angel of the Lord did to Manoah, with the supernatural exhibitions of the powers of the age to come. This perfect likeness of the Church then on the earth—symbolized in the vision given to the prophet Ezekiel by the four cherubim with their four faces each, who are represented as being delivered out of the cold and lifeless state of nature in the whirlwind and storm of the seventh Vial of wrath—to the risen Church in the heavens, is also contained in that vision in the combined symbols of a wheel within a wheel, which prophecy in fact, under very different emblems, contains the same mystery of truth, inasmuch as it obviously signifies the infusion of that Spirit which is in the risen and glorified saints into the visible Church then on the earth; for in that prophecy there are not

only the four living creatures, but also the *likeness* of the four living creatures.

It is evident that neither of these two sets of pipes can with any propriety be said to form a part of the candlestick itself, but must be regarded as auxiliaries thereto, though necessary, doubtless, as conductors to supply the lamps with oil; and if, as we judge, the seven subsidiary pipes were *not* of gold, but were composed of some inferior metal, whilst the two main pipes *were* of gold, this difference in the symbols would lead us to the conclusion that the symbol of the two golden pipes, which are represented in the vision as being immediately connected with the bowl on the top of the candlestick, signify men in *incorruptible* flesh, who shall be used in that day in communicating the Holy Ghost; whilst the seven minor pipes, not of gold, upon the same principle, would symbolize the ministries in the Church on the earth in *corruptible* flesh, to whom the Spirit will be then thus communicated, and through them to the Church at large. For we can arrive at no other result—that is, if the oil is emblematical of the Holy Ghost, and the candlestick of the Church—that the two sets of pipes must of necessity signify two distinct class of ministries, through whom the Holy Spirit shall be conveyed to the Church; and if gold, as the most imperishable

of all the precious metals, is to be taken as the symbol of incorruptible flesh—and when it is considered, moreover, that these two golden pipes alone are, in the figure, connected with the bowl—we see no alternative than the conclusion that this part of the symbol is intended to point to a superior class of ministry than the Church on the earth contains, and that class to be the risen and glorified saints.

Thus have we discovered, in the symbolic vision given to Zechariah, by what we cannot but regard as a simple and natural interpretation of the symbols, without either strain or effort, the same momentous truth which presents itself to view from almost every portion of the Scripture prophecies; so that, from whatever point we contemplate the Church, in the last days of her history, we find good grounds for the conclusion that, in her final struggle with the powers of the infidel Antichrist, during the great tribulation of the last times, the risen and glorified saints, symbolized by the hundred and forty and four thousand who are seen standing with the Lamb on Mount Sion, are the channels through whom spiritual power and support will be conveyed to her during her trial; and, moreover, that thus supported by heavenly aid from the cloud of glory, she will be enabled to present before the

world that double, and, therefore, only perfect witness for God, to which the prophecy of the two witnesses refers : and the inference is plain, that that conflict does not commence until after the first appearance of Christ in the air, the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living saints into immortality : and thus the vision of the candlestick, with its two sets of pipes, can only have fulfilment during the pouring out of the seventh Vial of wrath, as the coming of the Lord will take place at its commencement.

If our interpretation of this vision of the candlestick given to the prophet Zechariah be sound ; and, moreover, if we have succeeded in establishing its connection with the vision of the apostle John ; then we have developed a practical truth of the utmost importance to the Church at the present eventful era in her history : for, if these two separate and distinct sets of pipes, as conductors of the golden oil to the seven lights, are intended to symbolize—the one, the risen and glorified saints in the heavens, and the other the Church then on the earth, as the administrators of the Holy Ghost in those days—then it follows, that the expectation of conveying the Holy Ghost to the Church, otherwise than through the immediate agency of the risen saints, amounts—to adopt the language of the symbol—to the setting

aside of the two main golden pipes altogether, and connecting the seven subsidiary pipes directly with the bowl that contains the oil ; which, it is needless to observe, is at total variance and contrary to the prophecy as expressed by these distinct, though not separated, symbols.

This prophecy also confirms the opinion that the latter rain of the Spirit will not be poured down upon the Church *before* the translation of the saints, but *afterwards* ; inasmuch as if the risen saints in their immortal and incorruptible bodies are to be used as the principal agents in its communication, then they must first be translated into the spiritual state, in order to the fulfilment of their heavenly mission.

Indeed, it is almost inconceivable that the Church, in her present disunited and therefore unholy state, should receive that investiture of spiritual power which it is expected the latter rain will convey ; far less that her ministries who, to say the least, form no exception to this too general rule, should, in their present condition, become the agents for its communication : for, admitting that the Holy Ghost is to be communicated to the subordinate ministries, and the Church at large, by the laying on of the hands of a superior ministry in the visible Church on earth, common consistency would require that such ministries

should first have received the gift themselves, either directly from God, as on the occasion of the first outpouring of the Spirit, or “**BY THE HANDS OF**” the risen and glorified saints, as we suppose will be the case when that second descent of the Holy Ghost takes place spoken of in Scripture as the latter rain. A contrary opinion supposes that spiritual unity could be conveyed by the laying on of the hands of a disunited ministry; which, independent of such a notion being an absurdity in itself, is quite contrary to the past experience of the Church as well as opposed to the spirit of all revealed truth.

We may be uttering hard sayings, but with the elements of dissolution now rapidly at work, and the final destruction of all things already so fearfully begun, we are not disposed at the close of our labours to withhold the expression of perhaps unwelcome truths; and we have yet to receive a few practical lessons in the school of human expediency before we can consent, as interpreters of prophecy, even to qualify, far less suppress, what we consider to be a true exposition of the divine record, out of consideration to the feelings or preconceived notions of any man: and, if we read that record aright, the solemn truth presents itself to view from every point of the prophecies which bear any allusion to the Church of Christ in the

last days—that before she will be endowed with power from on high she will first be reduced to the condition of utter brokenness of heart before God, and may be also, at the same time, the scoff and derision of the world. Indeed, to invest the Church with spiritual power, in the present state of her heart and spirit, would be, *not* for the healing of the nations, but for their destruction : for, alas! she knows not of what spirit she is of, for she has yet to learn that to reign with Christ she must also suffer with Him ; and in that day she shall know that the blessedness of God's healing hand can only be fully experienced by those who are of a broken and a contrite spirit. A very short time will now prove whether these views are in accordance with the spirit of divine revelation, or whether we have been following the *ignis fatuus* of a heated imagination. But let us resume our subject.

The prophecy in Zechariah leaves us little doubt as to the exact period in the history of the Church to which this symbolical candlestick points ; for, between the vision itself and the explanation of the attendant angel through whom it was given, a prophecy is inserted of Christ, under the type of Zerubbabel, as the builder of the spiritual temple ; and if we refer to the prophet Haggai we further discover that, whilst the second tem-

ple at Jerusalem, as built under Zerubbabel's superintendence, was inferior to the first temple built by Solomon in exterior grandeur and internal ornaments; yet, of this second temple, the prophet Haggai declares that God will "fill this house with glory;" and, moreover, that "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former," and that in that place God would give peace (Haggai ii. 3, 7-9).

Now, unless this prophecy of Haggai, as respects the second temple, received accomplishment in the personal ministrations of our Lord when on earth, it never had, and it is quite obvious cannot now have, any fulfilment at all, as the temple was utterly destroyed at the close of the Jewish dispensation, and in all other respects the second temple was inferior to the first. But the prophecy did, no doubt, then receive fulfilment; for it is on record that Christ daily taught in the temple, of whose person the Shekinah in Solomon's temple was at once the type and symbol, in which temple, moreover, we would add, our Lord Himself did many things which were again typical of future transactions in the spiritual Church: such, for example, as forcibly expelling the money changers, and those who bought and sold in God's house of prayer, immediately consequent upon His triumphant

entry as a King into the city of Jerusalem. And it is, doubtless, to a still future fulfilment in the spiritual temple of the Church, and not to the literal temple (simply, because there will be none in existence at that time), that the prophet Malachi alludes, when he says, the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, and then adds these remarkable words:—"But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap. And He shall sit *as* a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering into righteousness" (Malachi iii. 2, 3).

For these and many other reasons which we have not now space to enlarge on, it appears to us to be very evident that the introduction of this prophecy of Zerubbabel, in the vision of the golden candlestick with its seven lamps and two sets of pipes, is for the express purpose of directing the Church's attention to the *period* of the accomplishment of the prophecy: thus, the great mountain which becomes as a plain before the spiritual Zerubbabel would signify that mountain of opposition which the infidel Antichrist will raise against the Church in that day when Christ is revealed as the builder, but which, neverthe-

less, shall melt away, not by might (or, as it is in the margin, by an army), nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, who uses "those seven (that is, the Church on earth) as His eyes to run to and fro through the whole earth;" or, in other words, the duplex testifying Church in that day shall overcome Satan and the beast "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," because they love not their lives even unto the death.

Nor can we fail to remark that, as Christ's personal presence in the second temple constituted its true glory, and was itself the sign of a new *eon* in the history of the world—the closing of one dispensation and the giving of another—so Christ's personal appearance in the heavens to cleanse His spiritual temple by the aid, and through the instrumentality, of the risen glorified saints, will constitute that sign of the Son of Man in the heavens that shall declare to the world the termination of the present dispensation, and the introduction of the more glorious age to come—even those heavenly things which are only presented to faith in the Christian Church. But let us once more return to the prophecy as recorded in the Apocalypse.

Now, these two witnesses in the apocalyptic vision are represented as being endowed with

power to devour their enemies; and though their testimony is rendered, whilst "clothed in sack-cloth," yet, "AS OFTEN AS THEY WILL, they have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues."

We are quite aware of the general reading of this portion of the prophecy, and that this description of the power with which the two witnesses will be endowed, signifies that they will literally destroy those enemies who oppose themselves to their testimony: but we wholly reject such an interpretation of the prophecy, not only because it is diametrically opposed to the true spirit of that Gospel for which they witness, and contrary even to the letter of the prophecy itself when closely examined, but also because such an exposition is wholly inadequate to the deep spiritual truth the prophecy contains, and which, we think, will be fully developed in the members of Christ's mystical body during the period of this duplex testimony of the Church in the last days. Surely it is rather David in the cave of Adullam, with power over his enemy, yet forbearing to take his life—the power to call down fire from heaven to destroy their persecutors, and yet loving them with that intensity that

prompts only to save—the having twelve legions of angels at command, and yet not choosing deliverance, but submitting to shame, ignominy, and death, for the love which they bare unto all men, uttering from the heart, on behalf of their enemies, the prayer of our Lord and His faithful martyr Stephen, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” It is comparatively an easy matter to testify to truth, conscious of being supported by power with full liberty to exercise it in our own defence; but it is not an easy task to testify to an obnoxious truth, either without any power at all, or, if held, to feel the obligation from some overpowering cause to restrain its action. The most cutting taunt ever uttered by the pharisaical Jews to our Lord was that which the chief priests, and scribes, and elders, threw in His teeth whilst in the agonies of death, saying, “He saved others, Himself He cannot save,” when a breath from His sacred lips could have annihilated in one moment the whole visible creation. Let us, however, proceed at more leisure with such an important portion of the prophecy.

The common understanding of this part of the vision, relating to the two witnesses, is founded upon the *apparently* obvious declaration of the prophecy itself; but, if the passage be narrowly

examined in connection with its context, we think it is evident that the words used do not of necessity mean that their enemies were actually destroyed by this extraordinary supernatural power which these two symbolic witnesses are said to possess ; and we contend that such a conclusion must, therefore, be rejected, if it be found inconsistent with the general tenor of the prophecy : moreover, we maintain that, so far from there being any internal evidence in the vision itself for such a construction of the words, the very reverse is the case ; and, consequently, the prophecy can only be regarded as declarative of the supernatural power which these two witnesses had at command, and not as a description of its actual demonstration in the destruction of their enemies. Nor do we think the strong expression which occurs in the fifth verse at all inconsistent with our view of the prophecy, as though the words, "if any man will hurt them he must in this manner be killed," referred in the way of description to an event that had already taken place ; but, on the contrary, that this expression rather contains a prophetic intimation that all such opposers of God's truth will eventually be destroyed AFTER THIS MANNER—that is, by spiritual power proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, and the mystical members of His body,

and which truth is more plainly declared in a subsequent vision, wherein it is said that "the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of His mouth:" which figure is a beautiful emblem of the power of "THE WORD;" for, if Word was competent to create, it is also competent to destroy.

This interpretation is not only perfectly consistent with the spirit which it is reasonable to suppose these witnesses would exhibit, declarative as testifiers of the love of God to man, but is also in perfect conformity with their subsequent history as described in the prophecy itself; since it is quite evident that, if they exercised this power for the annihilation of their enemies, those very enemies could not afterwards be represented, even in the figure, as still alive to persecute and inflict death *on them*: the two things are quite incompatible the one with the other, as well as with the entire history; for their enemies could not be said to be at one and the same time dead, and yet alive and in power; and that they are alive, even at the translation of these two symbolic witnesses into the cloud in heaven, is quite obvious, because it is subsequently stated, expressly, that when they ascend up to heaven their enemies *behold* the marvellous sight; and it is because,

though possessing the power, they do *not* put it forth, that after finishing their testimony the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit can overcome and slay them—*not* because they have no power of resistance, but because they restrain its use from a spirit of love to them, and in the exercise of a patient endurance of evil for Christ's sake.

But we maintain the supposition that the power with which these two witnesses are invested, being exercised for the destruction of their own enemies, is not only at variance with the general character and tendency of the prophecy, but is wholly opposed to the spirit of that Gospel for which they are set as true and faithful witnesses, which teaches us to love and not to hate and destroy our enemies ; whilst, on the other hand, the interpretation we suggest is not only perfectly consistent with both, but is, moreover, in complete accordance with the history of the Church during the last days, as ascertained by the interpretation of every other prophecy which relates to that period.

It is true these two witnesses *do* put forth power, but it is the power to save, not to destroy—excepting, indeed, when exercised in the way of opposition to those spiritual forms of evil which they will have to encounter in the execution of

their heavenly commission ; for, if we read this portion of the prophecy aright, these two symbolic witnesses are intended to signify that testimony in power yet in suffering and sorrow, symbolized by the sackcloth covering (which was ~~the~~ outward emblem of mourning among the Jews), that shall yet go forth to the nations of Christendom from the spiritual temple, carrying into the heart and recesses of the whole visible baptized Church, the witness of the true Gospel to all men in covenant with God, declaring that the hour of God's judgment on *all* apostate Churches has come, and warning all men to worship God and not the beast, neither to receive the mark or the number of his name on their foreheads or in their hands.

And how will the Church then become a double witness for God to the nations of Christendom ? We answer, through the proper ministries constituted for this end, by witnessing to Christ then in the heavens, through the understanding, and through the Spirit also ; thereby exhibiting to all men, in such ministries, their testimony as men, and also through their lips, the witness of the Holy Ghost ; thus fulfilling that word of the Lord Jesus Christ in the last act of the Church, that the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, should testify of Him and His disciples also.

But this twofold form of testimony is again susceptible of a subdivision, which presents to our contemplation another twofold aspect of the Church's witness in the last days of her history : for, whilst the witness of the Church, by the lip of man, distinctly points, as we have seen, to a duplex form which such witness has already and will yet again assume in the Church, there is another equally important testimony to Christ which, whilst it constitutes the twin truth to that of man's life, is itself capable also of a twofold division—we mean the equally powerful and not less needful testimony of The Life; and which we doubt not the Church will in that day exhibit before all men—by the spiritual fulfilment of the law in perfect love to God and man, without which the apostle Paul informs us, in his epistle to the Corinthians, even the other testimony, powerful as it is, is but as sounding brass and as a tinkling symbol. Ah ! ye who profess to be looking for the perfection of the Church to prepare her for the coming of her Lord, turn your eyes away from its outward order or form, and look for it in the spiritual law of love engraven upon the heart and exhibited in the life of man. Thus, these two witnesses will then go hand in hand in social harmony together—lip and life—precept and example; the former receiving out-

ward expression by utterance of the lip through man's spirit and understanding—the other in a life of perfect love to God and man. But wherefore in sackcloth? Wherefore in sorrow and mourning? Because Christ, for whom the Church shall then thus witness, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; because Christ had the heart of a man and not a heart of stone; and to enable the Church thus to witness her heart shall yet be broken. Ah! think ye the cold and lifeless thing we call “religion” can breathe the atmosphere of heaven? The spirit that can dwell *there* must first learn to love *here*. And it is because the Church now sympathises so little with the spirit of their risen Head that she hath such need to be broken, and that she will yet have to be perfected through the sufferings and tribulations of the seventh Vial of wrath: and when, through that fiery trial, she is brought to feel sympathy with Christ, she will fully understand (but not before) how far removed from that fellowship she is *now*. Those are most sensible to the inconveniences of a cold atmosphere, who have experienced the effects of a warmer and more genial clime.

It will be in this—the *third* of the *four* periods of time into which we have seen the prophecies divide the first fourteen years of the seventh and

last Vial of wrath, that the Church will exhibit to the world the spiritual reality symbolized by the third face in the head of the four cherubim which the prophet Ezekiel saw coming up out of the north—the cold death of nature, and in the whirlwind of the seventh Vial of wrath; when a man's heart shall be given to the Church, emblematized in the cherub by the face of a man. This is the evangelist aspect of the Church—the time for the preaching of the Gospel symbolized by the three angels in the fourteenth chapter of the Apocalypse—when the Church, through her ministries, shall exhibit to their baptized brethren, not the rancour of spiritual pride and opposition, but the loving heart of a man ready and willing to pour out his life for the brethren: this, and this only, is the true witness for Christ, who, being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich; and such a spirit alone is able to gather men into the true Church of Christ. THEN, notwithstanding that God's judgments will be abroad upon the earth, Christ will yet look upon His baptized people through the face of a man, and still seek, in the midst of judgments, the salvation of His spiritual children: THEN shall the harvest of the Church be reaped, and a countless multitude gathered into the garner of the Lord: THEN shall

Christ see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied ; and songs shall be heard from the uttermost parts of the earth glorifying the Lord in the fires ; yea, they shall lift up their voices and sing for the majesty of the Lord, and cry aloud from the sea ; for, when God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness.

Now, so far from the declaration of God's grace to man being incompatible with the pouring out of judgments, even of the most overwhelming character, at one and the same time, there would appear to be a peculiar appropriateness in a combination of the two dispensations, which, so far from regarding as contrary the one to the other, we maintain that the one is essential to the other in the present state of the Church ; for nothing but judgment can effectually open her eyes to her true condition, and shew how lamentably, notwithstanding all her present high professions, she has departed from God. Mere word has lost all its power, and all sections of the Church appear to be so perfectly satisfied with their own position in the Catholic body, that any man who boldly avows his conviction of the defection of all alike from the true spiritual standing of a Christian Church is, in spirit, cast forth of all, and would doubtless, were such things now

permissible, soon meet with a very summary fate. So palpably is this the case that, perhaps, it would not be too much to say that the truest criterion of pure Catholic truth in the present day would be, that its supporters could find no strenuous advocates in any one section of the whole body. But the judgments which are already now begun at the house of God, in truth carry, though disguised, God's message of mercy, and will in the end prove the means which will awaken the Church of Christ to the knowledge of her true state before God. Sorrow and tribulation will be found to produce, by community of suffering, that oneness and fellowship which no other means can effect; and if the Church will not, by the gentle dealing of word and a more lenient experience, enter into that unity, there is no other alternative than that of the severer dispensation of judgment. But the *end* is love, though the *means* may be one of God's strange acts; and the day is not now far distant when the Church will justify God in thus resorting to His last alternative, rather than suffer her to go on in her own self-sufficient course. With such views we should not be surprised to find that the professing spiritual children of God will yet be peculiarly made to feel the hand of God in the way of chastisement, as a last appeal to them

before the final judgments are let loose upon the nations of Christendom with that severity, which the Scripture prophecies invariably predict will be the case in the last days of the Gentile dispensation.

We are utterly unable to express our own conceptions of the perilous trials which this prophecy of the two witnesses suggests to our minds the Church will then have to endure : it will prove to be the very opposite of her present experience and condition. Outward persecution and suffering will be supportable when compared with that spiritual conflict in which she will be engaged, both within and from without, through all of which she will be required to exhibit this perfect and twofold witness to God in lip and life. So far from exercising her power to destroy her enemies, the very test of her fidelity to God will be that she possess the power to annihilate them ; and yet, at the peril of losing her crown, can exert it only to bless : yea, to bless those who persecute her—invariably to return good for evil—blessing for cursing—love for hate ; for this spirit, and this spirit alone, can constitute the Church of Christ the true and twofold witness for that God who is love, *whilst in fallen humanity*. And this witness the Church yet shall give : yea, in full measure, heaped up and pressed down,

though it may be produced by blood forced through every pore of her suffering flesh—thus filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in the flesh for His body's sake, the Church. Where will then be religious expediency? Where the outward profession of the lip, whilst the affections and desires are secretly given to the world? Where external consistency, whilst almost every form of spiritual evil remains unsubdued or unchecked, and perhaps allowed to work even unsuspected in the heart? Where then the seeking the priesthood as a mere profession, or a source of advantage, without a due sense of the sacred obligations of the office, or a proper estimate of its responsibility? Ah! it is the sons of Levi who will first be purged. But what a contrast will the Church *then* exhibit to that which she is *now*! *Now*, the Church is a spiritual icicle—*then*, she will burn with the fire of God's love. *Now*, a man may really maintain a very respectable and decent profession of religion, and pass current as a very exemplary Christian, without one spiritual evil of his heart subdued, or a fleshly propensity crucified—that is, provided he regulates its action by an observance of outward consistency—*then*, the perfect law of love will be required from all in the spiritual temple of God's house, and ALL must be holy in heart and

life—ALL witnessing for God in the sackcloth covering of fallen and crucified flesh, and sending forth this witness in the ministries of the Church to all the nations of baptized Christendom. If it should appear that this high standard presented for the attainment of the Church at the period referred to is chimerical, because it seems to be impracticable to us in these days, we must remind our readers that the prophecy points to a period when she will have received that second outpouring of the Holy Ghost, symbolized in the Scriptures by the latter rain, and that, consequently, the spiritual fruits in the Church will then ripen into full maturity : for God sends no man a warfare upon his own charges, neither does he expect to reap where he has not sown. If our readers will refer to the sixty-sixth Psalm they will find there recorded a description of the experience of the Church at the time to which we allude ; and we would take this opportunity of observing that all those Psalms which express the personal experience of our Lord Himself, during the days of His humiliation and suffering, glance on also to the final sufferings of the mystical members of His body, when God shall try the Church as silver is tried, and when He shall bring her into the net, and lay affliction upon her loins, so that men shall ride over her head, and, after being though brought

through fire and water, she shall yet in the end be brought into a wealthy place (Ps. lxvi. 10, *et seq.*)

Now, this spirit of perfect love to God and man, which the prophecy of the two witnesses intimates will then be revived in the Church by this baptism of fire (Love); and the experience through which she will pass, in the delivery of her testimony, will prepare her for the following and last episode in her eventful history during the times of the infidel Antichrist: for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" and these are they of whom it is predicted, that "they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. xii. 11). And it is because the devil and his angels with him are then cast out of heaven, and have come down to the earth, having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time, that the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them; and shall overcome them; and kill them; for it is the time when Satan in the beast shall "open his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, and to make war with the saints, and to overcome them" (Rev. xiii. 7).

We can be at no loss in ascertaining *when* this persecution of the saints will take place, for the prophecy expressly connects this open warfare of the beast with the saints—that is, the witnessing Church of God on earth to Him who then dwelleth in the heavens—with that time of the infidel's supremacy when power shall be “given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Nor can there be any doubt but that this action in the prophecy points to the manifestation of an *open enmity* against the Church then on earth, in contradistinction to those more subtle forms of spiritual trial and temptation which Satan will previously adopt to sap the foundations of her faith, and carry her away as with a flood of falsehood and demoniacal spiritual delusion. So that this portion of the prophecy describes a new form in which Satan's rage and malice will be put forth against the Church, for, finding her resolutely resist his more subtle temptations and snares, he will then throw off the mask, and endeavour to exterminate her by open violence; to which end the beast that ascendeth up out of the bottomless pit, with the false prophet as his ally and abettor, will eagerly lend their aid: for it should not be forgotten that Satan, as a spiritual being, cannot have any power over the material bodies of men, except as exercised through the agency of other material beings; and it is out of this truth we

gather the peculiar fierceness of the final persecution of the Church, inasmuch as it is the result of Satan's having power given him on earth for "a short time," previous to his being cast into the bottomless pit for the space of a thousand years, and exercising that power through men.

Thus, this last persecution will be carried on by devil-possessed men, commencing immediately after the witnessing Church has finished her testimony; and will continue, as we learn from the prophecy, for a like period of three years and a half; thereby completing the fourth era in our fourfold division of the first fourteen years of the seventh Vial of wrath, and which, we have already discovered, corresponds with the last fourteen days of the Jewish harvest, as set forth in the twenty-third book of Leviticus.

The symbol by which the testifying Church is represented in the prophecy is still preserved in this last stage of her history; and these two prophets are described as being slain "in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt"—that is, in the broad open way of that sink of all spiritual and fleshly uncleanness, which Christendom shall then become.

It is utterly impossible that any figure could more strongly express the extremities of the Church's sufferings than the one selected in the prophecy; for it describes such a fierce and un-

relenting hostility, in persecuting the saints of God to death, that could only be adequately represented in the figure by the utter extinction of life. At that time of the manifestation of satanic rage against the Church, Christendom will become as one great slaughter-house, constantly presenting the spectacle of the dead bodies of God's spiritual children: and it is to this period the promise recorded in Rev. xiv. 12, 13, doubtless refers. This is the time predicted, on the occasion of man's fall, when Satan shall bruise the heel of Christ—the seed of the woman—for the space of three years and a half: and the beast, and those who have worshipped him, and those who have received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, shall rejoice over these two witnesses, and make merry, and shall send gifts of congratulation one to another, because they think that they have thus exterminated the testimony of these two prophets, who tormented all those who dwelt on the earth by continually witnessing against their federal head—Antichrist; testifying that he was the apostate one, and that the true Christ of God then dwelt in the heavens. When Christ, the true and faithful witness of God, was condemned to death, it is recorded that, “the same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together ;

for before they were at enmity between themselves." So when these two symbolic faithful witnesses of God shall appear to be destroyed, who so troubled the adherents of the beast, the inhabitants of the earth shall make merry and rejoice over them, because they tormented them that dwelt on the earth. Wicked men ever rejoice when the righteous fall, and thus shall it be then ; but their mutual congratulations shall be of short duration, for after (the) three days and a half the Spirit of life from God shall enter into them, and they shall again stand upon their feet, whilst great fear shall fall on those who see them ; for their enemies shall behold them ascend into heaven in a cloud, though these witnesses alone hear the voice which bids them come up into the heavenly places. And thus will the witnessing Church, at the close of their testimony, constitute the antitype of Elijah's visible ascension into heaven ; just as their forerunners—the first-fruits of the harvest of the Church—did that of Enoch : the one translation being invisible—the other visible to men in the flesh.

Thus have we drawn out of the apocalyptic vision the fourth head of the cherubim seen by the prophet Ezekiel—viz., that of the ox ; which is the appropriate and expressive emblem of the patient endurance of the pastors in the Church,

perseveringly treading out the corn—the word of God—for the spiritual food of the people entrusted to their care and oversight ; and, by not loving their lives unto the death, in the faithful discharge of their testimony, they thus follow the steps of that good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep. These be the four cherubim which Ezekiel saw, with their four faces each, coming up out of the north—the cold death of nature—in the whirlwind of the seventh and last Vial of wrath. These be the four living creatures which the beloved apostle saw before the throne of God: the GENERAL APPEARANCE of each one being different to the other, for they were GENERALLY LION-LIKE, CALF-LIKE, MAN-LIKE, and EAGLE-LIKE: by which we understand that each one of the four living creatures, *independent* of their four faces, had each also a general likeness to these four symbolic beasts; from which difference in the two descriptions we learn that the Church of Christ will possess, in all those four periods of her history, these four ministries in the Christian Church in full operation ; and yet, notwithstanding, she will be distinguished through all these phases, through which she will then pass, as we have already seen, by the development of the peculiar character of each of these four distinct ministries symbolized in the prophecy by the

face of a lion, an eagle, a man, and an ox ; and which respectively signify the several offices, in the Church, of the apostle, the prophet, the evangelist, and the pastor.

Now, this interpretation of these four ministerial developments of the Church's spiritual character, at that time of her purification, receives corroboration by a reference to the third chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, wherein the perfection of the Church, under the symbol of the full-grown stature of a man in Christ, is expressly and positively connected with these four ministries : and, if we understand the passage aright, it amounts to the declaration that, unless these four ministries are in full operation, the Church, as a body, can never be perfected : and it is doubtless for this reason that these four ministries, and the work of perfecting the Church in love, go hand in hand together in the apocalyptic vision ; so that the Church, during this period of her history, will present another duplex testimony to the world—the one consisting of a particular and the other of a general manifestation of a four-fold aspect, through which Christ, as the Head, is, in the symbol of the cherubim, represented as looking through His Church upon the world ; and, if our general exposition be true, then the last fourteen years of the Christian dis-

pensation, when the harvest of the Church shall be gathered in, will prove to be the period for its full development.

Immediately after the visible translation of the true and faithful Church of Christ, at the expiration of the last of these four periods of three years and a half—that is, at the close of the fourteen years—then the last act of judgment is represented as being inflicted on Antichrist and his assembled apostates in the land of Judea as well as subsequently in the whole of Christendom, as described in the remaining part of the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse; when we have little doubt but that all the seven vials, and the seals, and the trumpets, receive another and more literal fulfilment in the exterminating judgments of that time.

We cannot probably close the present number better than by a recapitulation of the reasons wherefore we conclude that these two symbolic witnesses, in the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, signify the Church of Christ, in the last days, sending forth from her bosom a twofold testimony to the nations of baptized Christendom, and which, it is quite needless to say, Christendom, in reference to her approaching judgment, has not hitherto received. It appears to us, for these and other reasons which the limits we have prescribed to this publication will not now allow

us further to enlarge on, that this symbolic prophecy describes the spiritual Church of Christ witnessing for God in the last days in a twofold form—and twofold—

First: because the Church will then be reconstituted on the foundation of apostles and prophets, of which two offices the Old and New Testament Scriptures may be taken as records in the form of two separate and distinct dispensations to man.

Secondly: because the Church will then exhibit in outward demonstration the witness of the Church then in heaven, as well as the Church then on earth; thus uniting the supernatural and invisible with the visible—the heavenly with the earthly—represented in vision to the prophet Ezekiel as a wheel within a wheel—the one being the invisible cause, the other the visible effects—expressed in the way of an outward testimony to the truth, love, and holiness, of God in His Church. This twofold agency of the glorified Church in heaven with the Church in flesh then on earth is contained in Zechariah's prophecy of the golden candlestick, with its two sets of pipes—the one set being of gold, the other of some inferior metal, through which the oil, the symbol of the Holy Ghost communicated to man, is conveyed to the candlestick—that is, the Church at large.

Thirdly: because this outward testimony of

the visible Church on earth is expressed in a two-fold operation of the Holy Ghost through the spirit and understanding of men—distinct and separate, yet withal united—symbolized in the Canticles by the two eyes of the bride, through which, in the figure, the Holy Ghost is supposed to be beaming on Christ through the Church with eyes of love, either one of which ravishes His heart, as it is written :—“Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck” (Cant. iv. 9).

Fourthly: because the Church will then exhibit to the contemplation of the world, and thereby condemn the world, the twin sister to the testimony of the lip—viz., the testimony of THE LIFE also; and which, as in the case of the witness on man’s tongue, will express itself in a two-fold manner—the one in perfect love to God, the other in perfect love to man. Thus, as the witness by man’s tongue will be exhibited in utterance through the Spirit and the understanding also, so the witness of the life will be manifested in the spiritual fulfilment of the law, according to that saying of our Lord—Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matt. xxii. 36-40).

Fifthly: because the Church then will develop

a second phenomenon. *Hitherto* the true spiritual Church has been invisible, enclosed within the visible ; *then*, the tares shall no longer grow up with the wheat, but shall be separated ; and *all* in the true visible Church of Christ shall *also* be of the spiritual and invisible. This truth appears (among many others) to be prefigured in Paradise by Eve being first created in Adam, and doubtless then invisible ; and, subsequently, existing apart and out of Adam, and then visible ; though, in both conditions, still Adam's spouse : and thus, Adam with Eve in the man, and Adam with Eve out of him, becomes the type of Christ and His bride, and forms in both states a perfect symbol of those two companies of redeemed ones, symbolized in Scripture as the bride of the Lamb ; either company holding Christ as their spiritual Head and Husband : AND THUS, BEING TWOFOLD, THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH IS THEN PERFECT AND COMPLETE ; AND WHEN THE APOSTATES ARE THUS CONDEMNED, UPON THE EVIDENCE OF TWO COMPETENT WITNESSES, THE WITNESSES WILL BE WITHDRAWN, AND EXTERMINATING JUDGMENT WILL BE IMMEDIATELY EXECUTED UPON THE FINALLY APOSTATE ; BECAUSE THEY WILL HAVE THEN COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST, BY DELIBERATELY REJECTING THE PERFECT AND TWOFOLD WITNESS OF GOD, AND PREFERRED SATAN'S RIGHT HAND MAN TO GOD'S.

APPENDIX.

WE are now arrived at the close of the last session of the present Parliament; and what has the nation, in and through her legislators done during its eventful career? She has been nobly employed in mitigating, by an extensive and active benevolence, the heavy stroke of God's judgments, more especially felt in one part of the empire; and her closing act, had time permitted, would have been that of passing "the Health of Towns Bill," which has for its object the prevention of disease and pestilence in our large towns: nor has this enactment of human foresight and wisdom been proposed without a distinct pledge that, in the next session of Parliament, another measure will be suggested regulating future intramural interments, the effect of which will be the creation of new burial grounds around all our largely populated towns. It is well—it is very well; for they shall yet be needed. Enlarge thy borders, O hades! open thy mouth wide, O grave! for thou shalt yet be filled, and, ere long, EVEN THOU shalt say, "It is enough:" for the days are come, spoken of by the prophet Isaiah in these words:—"I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth."

It is now nearly three months since a solemn day of fasting and humiliation was appointed by the Queen in

Council, for the nation to humble herself before God for her manifold sins, and to acknowledge that His heavy hand upon the nation was a righteous infliction of judgment. The churches were well filled on that occasion, sermons were preached and subsequently published, and the press has since teemed with pamphlets on the same subject, almost, however, all varying as to the cause of God's anger against the nation—some of our duly authorized monitors attributing it to the acknowledged increase of selfishness and covetousness in all classes of the community equally alike; others seeing it in the desecration of the Lord's-day and our thinly attended churches; whilst others, again, appear strongly impressed with our national iniquity in the abrogation of "the Test and Corporation Act," which, it is alleged, was but the precursor of other decrees of the Government, all leaning to destroy that separateness from the Papal apostasy which, since the Reformation, has formed an important and integral part of the constitution of the nation. Still the plague is not stayed; and, if there be any reality at all in the concession, now pretty generally made, that God's hand must be recognized as the inflictor of these judgments, then the inference is inevitable that His anger against the nation is not appeased by those acts of humiliation, simply because, instead of the evils with which we were then surrounded having been averted, they have not only been on the increase, but have been accompanied by others of a totally different character, and which, together, eventually threaten the destruction of our national prosperity. From this conclusion we can see no escape, except the resort of the openly avowed or secret infidel—viz., that such visitations of Providence have little or nothing to do with a people's sins, and occur at different intervals of the

world's history, quite irrespective of any nation's moral or religious standing before God.

We do not for one moment wish to diminish the just estimate of the prevalence of those sins to which allusion has been made: on the contrary, we admit their existence to the full extent alleged; but we do maintain that these are the *effects* and not the *cause* of the evil, which lies, in our opinion, more deeply rooted in the heart of the nation; and we contend that these open manifestations of wickedness are but the *consequences* of a nation's departure from God and indifference to His name; and, moreover, that this spiritual apostasy from Him is exhibited in the fact that, with certain exceptions, which only more strongly prove the rule, the nation has virtually rejected the Anointed of God as THE ONLY KING OF KINGS, AND THE ONLY LORD OF LORDS; for we have said in our hearts, "we will not have this man to reign over us:" THEREFORE have we been given up to a covetous and unholy spirit; THEREFORE do we see nothing to desire in the sanctuary of God; THEREFORE have our eyes become dim, so that we grope about as men in the dark, and cannot discern between good and evil—bitter and sweet. Because we see no beauty in Him who is the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely one, THEREFORE are we left to reap the fruits of our own doings, and to prove by bitter experience that ALL OUT OF GOD is an accursed thing. Nor, as far as we know to the contrary, has this sin been pointed to as the superinducing cause of those calamities which now so fearfully threaten to engulf the nation in one common and hideous ruin.

We have nothing to do with politics: let the potsherds of the earth strive with the potsherds of the earth; but we have to do with the interpretation of

prophecy; and we persist in declaring our conviction—and perhaps it may be for the last time—yea, though we were to stand alone, and were the point of every man's scorn—that THIS is the sin of the nation, which, if not repented of, will sink her into irremediable destruction. We are not discussing theories of truth, or playing with systems of prophetic interpretations, as children play with baubles: we speak whilst the judgments of God are fattening the earth with the blood of tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of our fellow creatures, and whilst the very ground itself is reeking and polluted by the putrefaction of human flesh. And we ask, is this a time to fashion and mince our words to please the ear of man, or to blow the trumpet with an uncertain sound from fear of man, when the destroyer has already begun his work of destruction at the very gates of the city? Wo be unto him that doeth the work of the Lord with a negligent hand! It would be well for us all to see that the blood of our brethren does not lie at our own doors, for God's inquisition for blood is at hand; and he that believeth the final judgments of God have begun must be furnished with some better excuse than we can imagine if he conceals the truth, and can yet stand acquitted before the Judge of all the earth. And surely God's judgments lingereth not, for His hand is stretched out still.

THE RETROSPECT.

No. XV.

If our preceding interpretations of the prophecies, as they relate to the history of the Church in the latter days be sound, then it will appear that she will develope at that time a four-fold ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors ; and that, thus reconstituted, she will also have to pass through four equal periods of time, of three years and a half each—extending over the first fourteen years of the seventh Vial of wrath ; each one of which periods will likewise be distinguished by a development of the peculiarities of either of these four ministries, in the regular order of their *manifestation*, though not in their order of dignity : thus, firstly, prophets ; secondly, apostles ; thirdly, evangelists ; and, fourthly, pastors.

Now, if we consider the order in which these

four ministries are manifested in the Catholic Church, as we have discovered their development in the Apocalypse, we shall find that the experience of the Church, and consequently of all her individual members, bears a close and striking analogy to each of these four offices ; and which offices, therefore, may with propriety be respectively regarded as appropriate to a four-fold spiritual condition through which the Church has always had to pass :—

Firstly : the word of God comes to the conscience and soul of man “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart :” of which powerful and searching word the prophet is the appropriate channel : then comes—

Secondly : the act of submission to the outward authority of the Church, which authority, as an ordinance, is vested in the apostle : then—

Thirdly : the sweet consolations of the Gospel of peace to the awakened conscience, which it is the blessed prerogative of the evangelists to administer ; and—

Fourthly : the patient resting in Christ, as a sheep in the hand of the good shepherd, of which rest in Jesus, the pastor, as one of the subordi-

nate shepherds, is the appropriate symbol, as well as the fitting ministry.

For though the simple declaration of the Gospel of salvation is doubtless the province of the evangelist, yet the proper field for *his* labours is *without* the outer circle of the visible Church, and not *within* its borders; since *all* who are brought into the Church, by baptism, are supposed already to have received the Gospel in the ordinary acceptation of the term: but the prophet is the original ordinance through which that word of the Lord comes to the Church which divideth asunder the soul and spirit of man: for the word, through the simple evangelist, is that of love and entreaty, though doubtless accompanied with warning, and has for its object gathering into the Church; whilst the word, through the prophet, is addressed to a higher spiritual condition, and has more respect to those already within her visible borders. There is too much need, however, for the exercise of the evangelist's office to those who are *within* the outer circle of the visible Church, for which ample provision is made in her constitution, by the institution of a higher order in this ministry, than that of the simple evangelist: but, as detail upon this branch of our subject is not our present purpose, further enlargement as to its true nature

and character will not now be requisite. We venture, however, to observe, that it appears to us the entire ministrations by word in the Church have assumed the peculiar character of this first and lower form of the ministry of the evangelists, whose functions are supposed to cease when the mind of man has intelligently received, and his soul fully apprehended by faith, the Gospel of the blood of Christ. Nor can there possibly exist a stronger proof of the degenerate condition of the Church than that which is derivable from the fact, that neither her ministers nor people dream of a step in advance of the assurance, that the soul of man is saved from the eternal penalties of unrepented sin ; and neither, consequently, recognise sufficiently a necessity for the development of higher ministries to build up the faith of the Church, or aid her further advance in divine knowledge.

Now, it is in order that the Church, as a Catholic body, may prepare herself for the coming of the Lord to this earth—that in the last days of her earthly career, and during the great tribulation of the seventh Vial of wrath, this four-fold ministry in the Church shall then be revived, as declared in the prophecies ; for, as we have already observed, the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, *expressly connects these ministries with the perfecting of the Church ;*

and, consequently, we are fully justified in the conclusion, that, *without them*, she can never be perfected ; and if not perfected in love, and thus made ready for the marriage of the Lamb, she can have no part in the first resurrection.

The fact, therefore, that our interpretation of one of the most important chapters in the Apocalypse, and which chapter, perhaps, has excited more interest among apocalyptic students, and most attracted the attention of interpreters than any other—consisting of the development of these four offices in the Church, both ministerially and historically—is a strong confirmation of its truth ; inasmuch as this exposition is found to accord with the Scripture account of the peculiar exigencies of the Church at that time ; for they invariably testify to her purgation in the midst of fiery judgments ; and it is inconceivable, even if we had not the express declaration of Scripture upon the subject, that that purification could be effectually accomplished otherwise than through those several ministries which were originally constituted by God to that express end.

We fear the prescribed limits of the present publication will not permit us to furnish the reader with the several illustrations of this truth from other parts of the Scriptures, as we had con-

templated ; but we cannot, however, refrain from directing his careful attention to the vision given to the prophet Ezekiel by the river Chebar, which, we doubt not, contains a full history of the Church in those days, under the symbol of four cherubim, which the prophet saw coming in a whirlwind out of the north, where cold is supposed to generate. The combined symbols plainly enough point to this four-fold aspect of the Church, as well as to the four eras in her history, which she will then have to pass through, during the process of her purification, signified in the figure by each of these four cherubim having four faces ; whilst, notwithstanding, the general appearance of each was that of a man. "And this was their appearance ; they had the likeness of a man" (Ezek. i. 5) : by which we understand that, during each of these four periods of time, the Church will possess the loving heart of a spiritual man. The description of the entire symbolic representation, as contained in the first and other chapters of this prophet, can leave little doubt upon the mind that the whole vision is another and complete symbolic representation of that truth which we have already found so constantly developed in other portions of the prophetic writings—viz.,

that in the last days of the history of the Church those risen and glorified saints, who are symbolised by the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed ones seen on Mount Sion with the Lamb, and who have been counted worthy to *escape* the judgments of the seventh Vial of wrath, will prove to be the invisible agencies through whom Christ, as the Head, then in the cloud of glory, will administer government and strength to the contending Church on earth during her struggle with the infidel oppression. This truth is discernible in the vision by the distinction made between "the living creatures" and "the *likeness* of the living creatures;" and also in the combined symbol "of a wheel *within* a wheel." We throw out these hints for the reader's own meditation, as it will be impossible for us now to enter into a full explanation of this most important prophecy: we shall, therefore, at once proceed with the history of those two symbolic witnesses, whom the apostle John saw in the vision caught up into heaven in a cloud, and whose translation from earth, into the immortal and glorified condition, he informs us their enemies *beheld*.

Our readers will probably already have anticipated the conclusion, that this duplex witnessing Church, signified by the symbol of the two witnesses, is identically one and the same company

as that multitude whom no man could number, referred to in the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse, and who are there described as being seen before the throne of God in the heavenly state, having come out of "the tribulation—the great one"—with their robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. They are obviously also the same company alluded to in the *twelfth* chapter of the Apocalypse, as those who shall overcome the great dragon, who is represented in the vision as being cast out of the region of the heavens, and then unthroned of his principality in the air, on Christ's *first* appearance within the atmosphere of this earth, overcoming him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, because they loved not their lives unto the death; and who, moreover, are subsequently signified in the same chapter as the *remnant* of the seed of the woman, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ: by which we understand the fulfilment of the perfect law of love both to God and man, besides witnessing a perfect testimony to Christ by the tongue, through the spirit, and through the understanding also: and, once again: they are the same duplex testifying Church who are alluded to, in the *thirteenth* chapter of the Apocalypse, as God's tabernacle, then on the

earth, when the dwelling place of their more faithful brethren, who have been as a first fruits of the harvest, is in the heavens. All these companies are one and the same faithful witnesses to God, who testify for Him in the midst of the apostasy of the world, and cheerfully give up their lives, and, with their lives, all other things ; “for all that a man hath, will he give for his life.” These are they who refuse to worship the beast, or his image, or to receive his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and who, in consequence, shall be exposed to the demoniacal fury of the last triumvirate of evil.

Now, if our identification of these several companies as one and the same be sound, and, moreover, that their ultimate deliverance from the power of their infidel foe be contained in the symbolic prophecy of these two witnesses, then is it reasonable to suppose that the intimation of such a wonderful and important event must be discoverable in other parts of the Apocalypse ; to which enquiry we shall now address our attention.

Having ascertained that the testimony of this duplex witnessing Church is directed against the infidel Antichrist of the last days, and, moreover, that these faithful witnesses are plainly distinguished in the apocalyptic vision as those who neither wor-

ship the beast, or his image, neither receive his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, we are thereby naturally led to enquire, in pursuing their future history, what is predicated in the same prophecy of these stout resisters of the beast?—what glorious destiny is in store for these OVERCOMERS in that perilous hour of temptation which “shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth?” The prophecy is not silent upon such an interesting question. In the elucidation of our subject, we shall quote two passages in the order of our interpretation, though not in the order of the apocalyptic narrative; and we beg the reader’s particular attention to the exposition of those several passages, inasmuch as we think they will be found to furnish a reply to the momentous question—whether this second company of redeemed ones, who are gathered into the garner of the Lord, during the spiritual harvest of the Church, will ALSO be made partakers in the blessedness of the first resurrection, and the reign of Christ on the earth for a thousand years—that is, to adopt the language of the Scripture symbol, whether this second company will compose part of the bride—the Lamb’s wife, or not?

It is, doubtless, the vision of a *second* company of the redeemed being seen by Saint John, in

the heavenly state, which elicited the suggestive enquiry of the elder—"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence come they?" The dialogue between the elder, who acted as the interpreting angel, and Saint John, conveys the idea of the apostle's silent wonder and astonishment at seeing such a large and distinguished company added to the heavenly hosts, when he had supposed that the glorious array he had just seen around the throne of God, was the full complement of the assembly in heaven. But a countless multitude had yet to be gathered in, before the heavenly things could be openly manifested on earth; and, if the great tribulation through which this faithful multitude shall come is that which is raised against the witnessing Church by the infidel confederacy, then, we not only are enabled to identify these two companies as one and the same, but, furthermore, we arrive at the important fact that, as a reward for their faithful testimony, these also will then be before the throne of God, and thus shall be made partakers of the blessedness of the glorious period referred to, when God, in Christ, shall tabernacle among men.

As we have already stated, there are two distinct passages in the Apocalypse which speak of the future condition of that witnessing Church,

who obtain the victory over the beast by their faithful testimony unto the death. We shall first offer our exposition of the *last* of these two passages, in the order of their narration in the vision, because the ultimate destiny of these overcomers is not therein so much surrounded with symbols as the other passage exhibits, and, consequently, will require less interpretation or argument. The passage alluded to is as follows :—

“ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and I *saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. xx. 4-6).

We believe the more correct rendering of part of the above passage would be as follows :—
 “ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and ALSO

the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and SUCH AS had not worshipped the beast," &c. We do not, however, lay much stress upon this criticism, though such a translation of the original would more strictly accord with our explanation of this important prophecy. It is quite obvious to us that the seer refers to two companies of the redeemed, who shall inherit the blessedness of the first resurrection, and not only to ONE; for, if he does *not* refer to two companies, then those who are symbolized elsewhere in the prophecy as the firstfruits of the general harvest—because translated *before* the occurrence of the final tribulation—would be altogether excluded from the company of these reigners upon the earth, since it is quite evident that, so far from *these* having been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, they are translated into the glorified condition at the *commencement* of the final tribulation; and *their* especial blessedness is that they are "accounted worthy to ESCAPE all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." So that any interpretation of this portion of the prophecy, having reference only to *one* company of the redeemed who shall reign with Christ upon the earth, and to restrict that company to those who had been beheaded

for their faithful witness of Jesus, would be to exclude all others, and, consequently, those who had previously exhibited the most worthiness—a position which, it must be admitted, is wholly untenable.

The passage may be thus paraphrased :—And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them—that is, to the hundred and forty and four thousand whom I had previously seen, on two other occasions, standing upon Mount Sion with the Lamb, in security and peace : but, besides these, I saw also the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God ; such as had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they, as well as the first company I saw, lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Now, whenever a prophecy is expressed in distinct and positive terms, and is not reasonably susceptible of any other meaning than the words obviously convey in the ordinary understanding of language, then we may be positive also : and, in the above passage in the Apocalypse, a distinct and unequivocal truth is enunciated, and cannot possibly admit of any dispute or discussion as to its true meaning, without infringing directly

upon the integrity of the written word of God. These casual departures from symbolic language, which here and there occur in the apocalyptic drama, are obviously introduced for the purpose of acting as occasional lights, to guide the traveller through the intricate mazes of this wonderful book. If, therefore, it be a reality that the infidel Antichrist shall, in the hour of his supremacy, claim divine honours, and demand the worship of those who submit to his authority—and, moreover, if the punishment threatened against those who *do* thus worship him be a reality—then is the reward, presented as an encouragement to those who *do not*, a reality also: and we contend that the especial reward of those who overcome the infidel beast, by refusing either to worship him, or to bow down to his image, or receive his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, is, that they shall be made partakers of the first resurrection, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years upon the earth, previous to the second resurrection, as distinctly stated in the prophecy before us.

But, in truth, this portion of the prophecy needs no interpretation whatever, since it is the simple announcement of a promise, and which, from its very nature, requires to be expressed in plain and intelligible language: for, upon what foundation

would the hopes of the Church rest, if promises were addressed to her in any enigmatical form, and thereby be susceptible of two constructions? Indeed, we cannot see any escape from the conclusion that these overcomers of the beast also have a part in the blessedness of the first resurrection—that is, if, by the beast, we are to understand the infidel Antichrist of the last days; for, even admitting that this symbol may have reference to other and preceding forms of iniquity, it cannot be denied that it also has reference to the *last* form of confederacy against God in the infidel Antichrist, in whom all former manifestations of evil will be finally headed up: so that the prophecy must, of necessity, include that future noble army of martyrs who shall seal, at that time, their witness of Jesus “by their blood,” not loving their lives unto the death.

Thus we arrive at the above conclusion from the internal evidence of the prophecy itself, independent of numerous other arguments, confirmatory of the same view, derivable from other portions of Scripture; to which, however, our space will not allow us now more particularly to allude.

Such a glorious termination of the Church’s final and desperate struggle with the infidel

Antichrist of the last days may, probably, not be in accordance with the general notions entertained as to the nature and character of her eventual deliverance; which, we believe to be, that the number of those redeemed ones, symbolized as the bride, or Lamb's wife, would be perfected and complete at the time of the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living saints at the first appearance of Christ in the air; and, consequently, that none others can be included in that glorious category. But we must leave the reader to judge for himself, which of the two views he considers to be most in accordance with the Scriptures of truth. Man, however, is always more exclusive than God, whose purposes of grace and mercy are more expansive than his narrow and limited conceptions; and though, it is true, the Church, as a body, have turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of God's love, and have proved indifferent to the glorious promises of the coming kingdom; yet there is another and stronger mode of appeal to be tried with her in the way of judgment; and the prophet Isaiah distinctly assures us that, "when God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

Let us now direct our attention to the *second* passage in the Apocalypse, to which allusion has

been made, and which we find recorded as follows :—

“ And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire ; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name : for *thou* only *art* holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

The above is the only other passage in the Apocalypse wherein those who “ had gotten the victory over the beast ” are alluded to, having reference to their future state and condition, *after* their deliverance out of the hands of the infidel oppressor—that is, without being presented to the seer in the vision under a more complicated symbol. Nevertheless, we think that a careful examination of this portion of the prophecy will conduct us to the same conclusion to which we have otherwise arrived by an examination of the symbolic prophecy of the two witnesses—viz., that the witnessing Church, after undergoing and

being purified by the early troubles of the seventh Vial, and which, as we have already seen, will terminate in a furious persecution of her to the death by the infidel beast, will be delivered out of his hands, by being caught up into the cloud in heaven, BEFORE THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE BEAST AND FALSE PROPHET, AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, THAT OF THEIR ADHERENTS. But, as we proceed with our interpretations, we think it will become evident that, whilst they are delivered *before* the consummation of the end, when the whole apostate Church, who are then left on the earth, will be utterly destroyed; yet, that they are represented as taking no part in the infliction of those judgments, though they will behold with their eyes, in safety and security the final extermination of the enemies of God, at the hands of the true David, with His mighty men of war; even those who have previously proved their superior fidelity and prowess in many a well-fought field. But, in what battle field?—one in which every carnal weapon must drop from a nerveless hand. Let us, however, examine the prophecy with care; more especially as it is very evident that the introduction of this second company of the redeemed, at this particular part of the vision, just before the final pouring out of the seven Vials of wrath upon

the beast, and the men who had his mark, and who worshipped his image, seems purposely intended to point to the exact time of their deliverance, as well as the position they will occupy, during the final infliction of those judgments.

A very slight attention to the fifteenth chapter of the Apocalypse will convince the reader, that the second and following verses of that chapter is a complete and most important scene of itself in the apocalyptic drama, though introduced in the apostle's narrative on this occasion, for obvious reasons, after an intercalary or parenthetical order : so that the first verse of the *sixteenth* chapter is, in fact, a continuation of the prophecy from the first verse of the *fifteenth* chapter, and contains, in detail, an account of the effects of the pouring out of those last seven Vials of wrath, which the seven angels are represented as holding in their hands, in the first verse of the preceding chapter.

Now, whilst the prophecy, as recorded in the *twentieth* chapter of the Apocalypse, and the fourth verse, represents, as we have already seen, these last faithful witnesses of Christ fully installed in their millennial thrones, the vision of the *fifteenth* chapter describes the condition of the same company *after* their deliverance from the power of their enemies, but *before* the final

and literal pouring out of the seven Vials of wrath upon the beast and his adherents, and, consequently, *before* their investiture with kingly power; inasmuch as that heavenly kingdom is not set up until *after* the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and the utter extinction of the apostate Church, upon whom those last seven Vials of wrath will be poured.

It must be quite evident that this view of the prophecy will enable us to fix the period for a more literal fulfilment of the seven Vials of wrath, to which literal fulfilment, most modern interpreters now agree, these symbols ultimately point; and, we think, little doubt can also be entertained but that the whole series of, perhaps, seals and trumpets, as well as Vials, will receive a literal accomplishment in those judgments which will be poured out on the beast and false prophet, as well as on those who have fallen into their snares, *after* the translation of the witnessing Church into heaven, and the infliction of which is destined to bring the Gentile apostasy to a close.

The simple narrative, as contained in the fifteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, of the appearance of this company of overcomers, after they "had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the num-

ber of his name," plainly states that they shall be removed to a place of safety, and from thence behold, in security, another and severer infliction of judgments than even those they had themselves just passed through, without laying any stress upon that interpretation of the symbols which we shall have to offer, but which, nevertheless, as will appear in the sequel, impresses us with the same momentous truth.

The prophecy exhibits these overcomers of the beast, instead of being exposed to persecution and death, as singing a song of triumph, and celebrating in loud strains the wondrous works of the Lord God Almighty, whose judgments shall then be made manifest upon the earth. And the simple interpretation of the symbols with which they are surrounded convey to us the idea that, having passed through the fiery ordeal of the great tribulation, they are now seen in a position of rest and security, exulting in those final acts of judgment which will end in the destruction of all their enemies.

These victors over the beast are represented as standing on "a sea of glass, mingled with fire." A sea of glass is symbolical of peace and tranquillity, in opposition to a sea in a troubled and boisterous state, which is emblematical of a re-

verse condition. Fire, in Scripture, is used almost invariably as a symbol of judgment. Any justification of such an interpretation of these symbols, either in the way of argument or illustration, we deem to be quite unnecessary, inasmuch as we regard the explanation of them as so simple, and as figures in such general use in the inspired volume, that instances will doubtless readily present themselves to the reader's own mind, and thus render further enlargement unnecessary. So that these two symbols of "a sea of glass, mingled with fire," when interpreted, are found to be in perfect accordance with the more open announcement in the prophecy, and convey to our minds the simple idea of the deliverance of these overcomers of the beast out of "the great tribulation," signified in the figure by the fire being placed under their feet, plainly indicating that, having triumphed in that great trial through which they had passed, they now stand in a place of perfect security, symbolized by "the sea of glass."

But there proceeds a song of exultation and triumph from these overcomers—a song of joy and thanksgiving at the manifestation of God's judgments upon the earth, which none can sing so well as those who have been made to taste of their bitterness.

Now, the introduction in this place of "the

song of Moses," the servant of God, as a typical representation of a still future song of triumph, which is termed "the song of the Lamb," is in perfect keeping with the symbolic arrangement of the whole of the Apocalypse, which derives all its figures from the Jewish history and economy. But, wherefore is "the song of Moses, the servant of God," thus so closely linked with the "song of the Lamb?"—wherefore are these two songs represented as being one on the lips of this noble army of martyrs, just reeking from the hot and fiery troubles of the great tribulation of the last days? We answer: because these over-comers celebrate the triumph of the Lamb of God over His and their especial enemy—the infidel Antichrist: of which future victory over the last enemy of the Church, the discomfiture of Pharoah and the Egyptian host was a true, though feeble, type. These are the heavenly choir who celebrate the glorious feats of the Lamb, with His called, chosen, and faithful ones—the hundred forty and four thousand—who, together, as mighty men of war, encounter, and discomfit that infidel usurper of divine honours—Lucifer, son of the morning. These are they who witness and celebrate from "the sea of glass," in security and apart from the terrific tumult, those wondrous acts which Christ, and those who are

with Him, shall perform, when He is revealed as the mighty One, stirring up jealousy as a man of war, and dashing the nations to pieces like a potter's vessel.

The song of triumph of Moses, the servant of God, has already been sung—the song of triumph of the Lamb has yet to be sung; and we may even now acquire some notion of the exalted strain of the latter by contemplating the style and character of the former.

The song of Moses, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the book of Exodus, was sung upon the occasion of the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea—an act of deliverance of the children of Israel from the power of their great enemy, which not one of them actively participated in, but were, on the contrary, merely the eye-witnesses and benefitters of a victory achieved by the Lord of Hosts alone, and without the aid or instrumentality of those who were thus delivered. If our readers will refer to the song itself, they will find that this is its peculiar character—attributing to Jehovah alone the discomfiture of the first kingly opposer of His purposes, and who is thus made to typify the last personification of evil in the infidel Antichrist. So that the plain declaration of the prophecy itself—without any reference whatever to the accompanying sym-

bol—then, again, those symbols themselves, as well as the reference to the triumphant song of Moses, all combined, signify one and the same thing—namely, that, previously to the consummating acts of judgment which consume the beast and false prophet, with all the remnant of their followers, the witnessing Church, who have successfully resisted the temptations and persecutions of this last triumvirate of evil, will be translated from earth to heaven, from whence, as from a place of perfect security, they will witness the final overthrow of their great enemy, and proclaim in songs of triumph the great and marvellous works of the Lord God Almighty, who is the Lord of Hosts, and the King of the age to come. The song then concludes with a triumphant allusion to the future, in the following glowing words :—“ Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for *thou* only *art* holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

Now, this allusion to the period when all the nations of the earth shall come up and worship God, carries us back to the prophecy which contains the complete and beautiful description of that blessed time, as recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the prophet Zechariah, and with which the prophecy in the Apocalypse is thus made to synchronize ;—

“ And it shall come to pass, *that every one that is* left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the king, the Lord of hosts, AND TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES” (Zech. xiv. 16).

The declaration of the prophet Zechariah, that that period will prove to be the true feast of tabernacles, of which the feast, as observed by the Jewish nation, was only a type, enables us to identify this company of overcomers, represented in the fifteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, with the palm-bearing multitude of the seventh chapter ; thereby supplying us with another argument in support of the conclusion to which we have already arrived, that these two, apparently distinct companies, are identically one and the same, because the bearing of palm branches in solemn procession was one of the most distinguishing features of that feast.

But this interpretation conducts us to another very important result, as respects the unfulfilled prophecies of the Revelation ; for, if the infidel beast be meant in the sixteenth chapter and second verse, of which there can be little doubt, then it follows that, whatever preliminary fulfilment these Vials of wrath may have already received, yet, that they are still to have another and, doubtless, more literal accomplishment ; and

this inference is plainly deducible from the fact that the infidel Antichrist, in his last form—and upon whom and his followers these seven Vials of wrath are expended—is not yet come up out of the bottomless pit : so that we are naturally led to suppose that it is to the exterminating judgments, which shall in the last days fall upon him and his adherents, to which these seven Vials of wrath ultimately and more especially refer. It will scarcely be necessary to observe, that such an interpretation of the prophecy, so far from being inconsistent with the application of these Vials to events which have already passed, is in perfect conformity with the principle already laid down, as respects the entire series of symbolic prophecies of the Apocalypse, which supposes this book to have been constructed with such divine wisdom and art, that the symbols therein employed are made to refer with equal exactness to different series of events in the history of the Church.

We have already seen, in our interpretation of the twenty-third chapter of the book of Leviticus, that the sacrifice of the seventy bullocks during the first seven days of the feast of tabernacles, typified the gradual reduction of the heathen nations of the world to the sceptre of Christ, after the translation into heaven of the witnessing

Church, and the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and which subjugation of the whole world, our theory of the times and the seasons supposes would occupy the last seven years of the seventh Vial of wrath.

Now, palm branches being placed in the hands of this witnessing Church, as detailed in the vision of the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse, naturally draws our attention to the feast of tabernacles, on which occasion they were always used; and, if we refer to that festival as a type, we shall find several observances which will, when their spiritual signification is ascertained, strongly corroborate our interpretation, both as to the time, as well as the character, of the deliverance of the Church, in the last days of her history, out of the hands of her infidel oppressor.

The Jewish feast of tabernacles began the day after the close of the harvest—viz., on the fifteenth of the month Tisri—that is, after the expiration of the last fourteen days of the Jewish harvest, reckoning from the first of the same month, when the feast of trumpets took place; and this festival continued for seven successive days, at the expiration of which its character was altogether changed, and the eighth and last day was considered the great day of the feast: so that this festival was kept by the Jews during the seven days

which intervened between the close of harvest and the eighth, or "great day of the feast." Now, during the first seven days, processions took place, and the children of Israel, on these occasions, bore palm branches in their hands; and, moreover, during the same period, the heads of families formed temporary booths of the boughs of the palm and other trees, either on the tops of their houses, or otherwise in the open air, in which they dwelt; and, besides the peculiarity of the burnt offerings of seventy bullocks, these two observances were the most prominent features of that important Jewish festival.

The palm tree is an universal symbol in Scripture of joy and victory, and was no doubt used in this feast as expressive of the gladness of the nation, that the fruits of the earth had been then all gathered in. Indeed, it is, on one occasion, *called* "the feast of ingathering" (Exodus xxiii. 16). It is to be observed, moreover, that all other nations celebrate the close of harvest by some demonstrations of joy; which practice, no doubt, was derived from this custom of the Jewish nation. These temporary dwelling-places of the children of Israel, during this feast, were an appropriate remembrancer that their fathers had sojourned in a wilderness condition forty years after they came up out of the land of Egypt, and before they

entered into the land of promise; which condition, though it was one of security, was, nevertheless, not their permanent abiding-place. Now, regarding all these observances of the Jews in that feast as typical of the spiritual Church of Christ, and applying them to the last seven years of the seventh Vial—which period corresponds with the last seven of the twenty-one days of the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus—that is, *after* the close of the harvest of the Gentile Church, but *before* the commencement of Christ's millennial reign, typified by the eighth, that great day of the feast—the question arises, what condition of the witnessing Church is thereby signified? We answer—doubtless the same we have discovered contained in the symbolic prophecy of the fifteenth chapter of the Apocalypse—viz., that these faithful witnesses, who oppose the pretensions of the infidel Antichrist, will be placed, at the close of the harvest of the Church, in a state of joy and blessedness; but, though in a place of security, yet the temporary booths set forth that they have not then entered their everlasting dwelling-place; and, moreover, that, at the expiration of the seven years, they shall take quiet possession of their inheritance, indicated in the type by the Jews, at the expiration of the

seventh day of their feast, breaking up their temporary booths, and re-entering their permanent dwellings.

Thus have we endeavoured to trace out from the Scripture prophecies the future history of the infidel apostasy, and, contemporaneously, the history of the Church of Christ—the one ending in their eternal expulsion from the presence of God ; and the other in their eternal enjoyment of the light and blessedness of His countenance. We will now proceed briefly to offer some explanation of those natural phenomena, which are universally predicted in the Scriptures as the accompaniments of the great day of God Almighty ; and, with this object in view, we shall quote a few of those passages in the prophecies where those predictions occur.

Isaiah v. 30.—“And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea ; and if *one* look unto the land, behold darkness *and* sorrow ; and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.”

Isaiah viii. 21-22.—“And they shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry : and it shall come to pass, that, when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

And they shall look unto the earth ; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish ; and *they shall* be driven to darkness."

Isaiah ix. 19.—"Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire : no man shall spare his brother."

Isaiah xiii. 10.—"For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light ; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine."

Ezekiel xxx. 3.—"For the day is near, even the day of the Lord *is* near, a cloudy day ; it shall be the time of the heathen."

Ezekiel xxxii. 7, 8.—"And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark ; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God."

Ezekiel xxxiv. 12.—"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered ; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."

Joel i. 10 to 13.—"The field is wasted, the land mourneth ; for the corn is wasted ; the new

wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen ; howl, O ye vine-dressers, for the wheat and for the barley ; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth ; the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, *even* all the trees of the field, are withered ; because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests ; howl, ye ministers of the altar ; come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God : for the meat-offering and the drink-offering is withholden from the house of your God."

Joel i. 15 to 20.—"Alas for the day ! for the day of the Lord *is* at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, *yea* joy and gladness from the house of our God ? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down ; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan ! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture ; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry : for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burnt all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee : for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness."

Joel ii. 1, 2.—“ Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain : let all the inhabitants of the land tremble : for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand : A day of darkness, and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains : a great people and a strong ; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, *even* to the years of many generations.”

Joel ii. 10, 11.—“ The earth shall quake before them ; the heavens shall tremble : the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army ; for his camp is very great : for he is strong that executeth his word : for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible ; and who can abide it ?

Joel ii. 30, 31.—“ And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.”

Joel iii. 15.—“ The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.”

Amos v. 18 to 20.—“ Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord ! to what end is it for you ? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.

As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord *be* darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it."

Amos viii. 9 to 12.—"And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water; but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

Micah vi. 15.—"Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine."

Habakkuk iii. 17.—"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from

the fold ; and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls."

Zephaniah i. 15 to 18.—"That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord : and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath ; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy : for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."

Matthew xxiv. 29.—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

We have quoted all the above passages in full, in order that the reader may have them fairly, at one view, before him. All these, and other similar prophecies, glance on to the end of the Gentile dispensation, though, as will appear, from the contexts of each, that the predictions primarily apply to the Jewish nation. We need scarcely

here observe that such is the method observed in all the prophecies of the Old Testament, and that the experience of the Jewish people is almost invariably made the occasion of a larger and more distant prophecy, applicable to the nations of Christendom at the close of the times of the Gentiles.

Now, there cannot exist a stronger proof of the truth of our general interpretation, as to the progressive character of the judgments of the great day of God Almighty, than that presented to us in the natural phenomena predicted in these prophecies. The gloom and darkness at the *commencement* of that day is obviously therein portrayed to be, not of that utterly hopeless character so as entirely to destroy the expectation of the husbandman; for it must be quite evident that, if there were *no* hopes of a harvest, no seed would be sown; and, if all distinctions of seasons were entirely lost, which a too literal interpretation of those prophecies would seem at first sight to imply, there could not exist any expectation of any produce whatever from the earth; the failure of the fruits of which these prophecies state will constitute one of the most distinguished tokens of the great day of God Almighty. So that, though, without doubt, the day of the Lord will be ushered in by many displays of supernatural acts, striking terror into the hearts of all men, yet, a

the *commencement* of that day; they will, judging from these prophecies, clearly not be of that overwhelming character so as to break down and mingle in hideous confusion the framework of general society, thereby producing, for example, such a state of disorder as that described in the twenty-fourth chapter of the prophet Isaiah, which description of utter dismay and ruin refers rather to the *consummation* of the great day of wrath, than its *commencement*.

We should, therefore, rather infer from the prophecies that this incertitude, as respects the season and the general produce of the earth, will be the effect of the partial withdrawal of the rays of the sun, occasioned, as we imagine, by the accumulation of those clouds which will then form, as it were, the ethereal ground of the saints in glory; which idea gives propriety in the prophecy to the oft-repeated declaration that that day will be a dark and gloomy one; and, moreover, we conclude, that the obscuration of the luminaries of heaven, upon whose benign influences the fruitfulness of the earth depends, will increase in intensity as that great day draws to a termination; so that, at its close, those phenomena predicted by many of the prophets will literally occur, when the sun and the stars shall withdraw their shining, and the moon appear to be turned

into blood. Nor do we, as we have already observed, abate one jot or tittle from the force and power of these predicted signs and appearances in the heavens, by contending that they progress in intensity ; for it would rather appear, on the contrary, the terrors of those judgments which they are designed to inflict will be greatly aggravated by their gradual development, thus acting alternately upon the hopes and fears of mankind. Disappointment implies the existence of a previous hope ; and suspense is more frequently found productive of misery than the absolute certainty of evil. A death which is protracted by torture, and which fluctuates between hope and fear, is surely more difficult to endure than its sudden infliction. In that day there shall be manifested to the whole world, at one and the same time, the impenitence of Pharoah, with his hardy defiance of God ; who, in the midst of the most appalling judgments, nevertheless steeled his heart against the hand that inflicted them.

Had we not the express declaration of Scripture to appeal to, we should only have to refer to the history of the past twelvemonth, and the present experience of the world, in support of the opinion, that a withdrawal of God's blessing upon the fruits of the earth will constitute one of the principal judgments of the last days. It is, perhaps,

not too much to say, that, from the Queen upon her throne down to the meanest artizan in the nation, the hopes and fears of all men are concentrated at the moment we now write upon the results of the approaching harvest. Nor is this position peculiar to our own nation ; the prosperity of all nations alike equally depend upon the cereal produce of the earth, so that one blasting wind, such as that which cut off last year the potatoe crop in Ireland in one night, visiting a large portion of the habitable globe, would inevitably entail upon mankind a larger amount of wretchedness and misery, as well as destruction of human life, than the most depopulating wars that ever devastated the world ; whilst, on the contrary, a superabundant harvest would confer joy and blessedness on all around. It should, therefore, be no source of surprise, with such facts so painfully forced upon our experience, that the last day of judgment should be distinguished by an especial failure of the fruits of the earth.

The Psalms are full of declarations to the effect that the blessedness and peace of the whole world are dependent upon the fruits of the earth : not to refer to the early traditions of the Church, which, however, connected the joy of the millennial kingdom of Christ with a superabundant increase in all her productions. But it will only be

when God's way is known upon the earth, and His saving health among all nations, and when all the people praise God, and the nations are glad and sing for joy, because He judges the people righteously and governs the nations upon earth, that the earth shall yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us (Psalm lxxvii.) But it will not be until ALL the nations of the world fear, honour, and acknowledge Christ as the Governor among the nations, and bow themselves before Him as the only DESPOT, the KING OF KINGS, and the LORD OF LORDS, that the earth shall yield her increase; FOR, TILL THEN, it shall be, OVERTURN, OVERTURN, OVERTURN, and confusion worse confounded. Men have shut up *their* bowels of compassion towards their fellow-men, and thought only of themselves; and God is now shutting up *His* bowels towards them; for they shall yet cry for help to Him who will turn a deaf ear to their cry, and laugh when the calamity of the proud and the scornful cometh upon them as a desolation. Already do we see the commencement of that day, spoken of by all the prophets: the husbandman shall be called to mourning, and shall be ashamed; the vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley, shall howl, because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine shall be dried up, and the

fig tree shall languish; the pomegranate tree, and the palm tree also; the apple tree and all the trees of the field shall perish, and all joy shall shortly be withered away from the sons of men (Joel i. 11, 12). Ah! all joy is darkened; for the mirth of the land is gone! Their silver and their gold, upon which men have put their sole trust, shall no longer be able to save them; for the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity.

But it is in that great day of God Almighty—that is, during the pouring out of the seventh Vial of wrath upon the fast apostatizing nations of Christendom—that we look for the literal fulfilment of all those prophecies of Scripture which hitherto have received either a partial or only a symbolical preliminary accomplishment, not only as respects natural phenomena, but also in reference to the experience of the Church; for THEN shall appear false prophets and false Christs, and men shall THEN literally say, Lo, here is Christ! and lo, there!—for spiritual things shall not any longer be treated as metaphysical abstractions, but they shall appear in all the realities of life; and both the mere liberalist, and the mere spiritualist, shall each be taken in their own snare: the one meeting spiritual forms of temptation, the

existence of which, in his ignorance and scepticism, he ever denied; whilst the other shall miss the truly spiritual, by not seeking it where alone it is to be found. Oh! the snares and subtle temptations of that day!—the mingling of good and evil to seduce men from the pure truth—the coming of Satan, *FIRST*, as an angel of light! deceiving, if it were possible, the very elect of God: and none *shall* escape but those who possess the Spirit of God, and really walk with Him in the Spirit. The letter of the outward law will then prove to be as the husk without the kernel which it encloses—the form without the substance—the semblance without the reality. Ah! and many who now ride in high places, and dream on in false security, shall fall, and be snared and taken.

We are inclined to think that the smooth and even tenor of the Church's course, for the past two or three centuries, has produced a general, but fatal and false persuasion of her exemption from any future experiences of sorrow and suffering that will but ill accord with our own conceptions of those trials, both spiritual and temporal, through which she will have to pass. We fear the truth in these days is too much forgotten, that suffering is indispensable to the Church's growth in grace, and her attainment of any spiritual

unity. Until modern times the history of the Church is but the record of her sorrow, and those pages must impress all with the conviction that, when she suffered most intensely, her gifts and graces most abounded. But it is not an arbitrary enactment of God, that the fruits of the Church should flourish most in the soil of a suffering heart ; neither is this principle adequately explained upon the supposition that God has assigned her so much present suffering as a counterbalance to future joy ; but the correct view of this truth is, that her sufferings are the consequence of her being set as a witness of that God whose every act is love : so that, without suffering, it is impossible the Church could ever exhibit those heavenly graces which can alone distinguish her from the world around ; and which, whilst they are the transcript of the divine mind, prepare her for the inheritance of the kingdom of God. This is the true reason wherefore the saints were given into the hands of the little horn, and wherefore suffering in this world is so invariably connected with the life of God in the Church. It is for the express purpose of conforming men to the image of Christ, and thus making them partakers of the divine mind, that they are made to drink of the same cup of which He Himself drank, and they are thereby placed

in the position to reflect the rays of the perfections of God: it is conformity to the sufferings of Christ which recreates man in the image of the invisible God, and enables him to exhibit to the world the same grace, truth, love, and holiness which is in God; nor can we conceive, if the Church is to enjoy an uninterrupted course of prosperity, how the forbearance and love of God towards us can be remanifested by her to the world. That such a standing of the Church, as a witness of God, involves the death of the flesh, and a much higher warfare in the region of man's spirit than we may now be familiar with, admits of little dispute; but if this spiritual conflict be severe, and few attain to the victory, the future reward is in proportion—"For since the beginning of the world *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, *what* He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him" (Isaiah lxiv. 4).

We know not what impression these interpretations of the Church's present position and her future history have made upon the generality of our readers: to ourselves they have been as a blaze of light shining upon the future purposes of God; nor are we conscious even of the existence of a single cloud to dim its brightness. We might have appeared, to our readers, on some

occasions, to have expressed our own convictions in too positive terms; but this has arisen, not from the desire of dogmatizing, but because we felt no doubt, in our own minds, as to the truth of the conclusions which were the result of our researches; and were, moreover, overwhelmed with their importance to the Church of Christ. We can conscientiously say that we are not aware of the existence, far less have we been guilty of the suppression of a single well-grounded objection or difficulty which, in the course of our enquiry, has been suggested to our minds: on the contrary, the whole interpretation appears to us to be consistent and easy, without either strain or effort; and has certainly produced, on our own minds, an assured conviction of its truth: therefore have we written. We have courted objections from all quarters—we have searched for them ourselves in almost every direction, and literally can find none—and it is a remarkable fact, which may here be mentioned with propriety, that, though we have received communications upon the subject from upwards of fifty different quarters, many of them clergymen of high standing in the Church of England, yet not one of them has ever contained a *difficulty*, far more an *objection* to any interpretations put forth in the “Retrospect;” but, on the contrary, if we may judge from those communications, they have

all produced a very opposite effect. We must leave it to the reader's own discernment to determine how far the appalling events of the present year—and which, be it observed, have all been developed since the commencement of this publication—will corroborate the general accuracy of our interpretations. We might point to the existence of God's judgments *now*, which, when the work commenced were only predicted, would most probably occur in the present year in corroboration of our own views; but we forbear; for their infliction is too appalling, and the subject too solemn, to allude to with the view of establishing the correctness of any system of interpretation, even though that system may involve the most momentous results affecting the immediate condition of both the Church and the world. We cannot, nevertheless, refrain from recording our testimony, that the fitness and harmony of the theory advocated in the "Retrospect" could never consistently be deduced from such a variety of symbolic prophecies, if the interpretations were not in accordance with the prophecies themselves. We submit, for the reader's consideration, that some palpable and insurmountable obstacle must, sooner or later, oppose a fatal barrier to any system having reference to the last days, which was not in conformity with the general denouement of the Gen-

tile dispensation, as pourtrayed in almost every page of the inspired record. A map, composed of disjointed pieces of wood, can be so put together as to exhibit, when complete, a perfect pictorial representation ; and, wherefore ?—simply because each separate piece has been previously carefully fitted to its place ; and we suggest that it would be utterly impossible for the ingenuity of any man—yea, for the wisdom and learning of the whole Church together—to form a consistent and well sustained series of expositions, involving, moreover, such a variety, and also such a contrariety of events, unless the transactions thus pourtrayed were the occurrences which the prophecies were designed to predict.

It would, perhaps, be useless to refer to the existence of other proofs in confirmation of the general truth of our interpretations which have not been advanced as arguments in the publication itself, but such corroborations—and forcible ones too—do exist, as *some* of our readers well know ; but which it would be almost impossible to introduce in the present work, inasmuch as they would involve explanations which, without much enlarged detail, could not be fully appreciated by the general reader ; so that much additional interpretation, as well as illustration of our subject, has been unavoidably omitted, be-

cause, if available at all, the investigation would have introduced us into too large a field of enquiry. Some of those illustrations, though not by any means all, have been slightly alluded to in the body of the work—such, for example, as the duplex union of Eve with Adam in Paradise—Ezekiel's prophecy of the cherubim, and the mystery of the bride, the Lamb's wife, so elaborately and beautifully illustrated in the Canticles; but these, with many other deep and precious openings of divine truth, we must now either leave for another occasion; or, it may be, the Lord may reserve a further unfolding of these mysteries to a future, though not a very distant, condition of the Church.

It is quite possible many of our readers may not concur with us in our estimate of the spiritual condition of the Church at the present time. The simple question is, whether the Church is in a flourishing state or not? We maintain the latter; and we think that such an opinion is most in accordance with the inspired record, which describes that standing in the last days of the Gentile dispensation in much stronger terms of reprobation than we have ventured to apply to her. That question, however, will soon be solved, and we think in a way that will startle and arouse some from their self-complacent

lethargy. Nor should we forget the solemn warning of our Lord Himself—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Pure truth can never become popular in the present condition of the Church or world. If a doctrine becomes generally prevalent, the phenomenon can only be accounted for on one of two principles: either the doctrine has become partially corrupt by its admixture with positive error, or the truth itself is received into a barren and unfruitful soil. There is no casuistry that can soften down this axiom, for it is based upon the experience of man ever since his creation, and stamped as truth by the word of God in every page of the inspired record; and we appeal to the history of the Church, and the world, as presenting one continuous stream of evidence in support of the truth of the assertion. This inaptitude to the reception of divine truth may not always arise from wilful predetermination to

reject it, but from the fact, that the world, being out of God, knoweth not God, and can, therefore, have no fellowship with Him, or possess a quick scent in the knowledge of His ways. If those who now stand in the ordinances in the Church were gladly to receive and sanction truth on its first presentation, then we affirm, without any fear of contradiction, that it would be the first instance on record, and such a phenomenon would prove that the Church was *not* now in the condition in which the Scriptures invariably assert she shall be found at the close of her career ; and, consequently, she does not *now* exhibit this sign that the end is near. But we appeal to the general history of the Church ever since the days of Moses — we appeal to the annals of our Reformation—and we appeal, moreover, to the personal experience of the men of this generation, and ask them if this truth was not made apparent to all men when the strange doctrine first reached our ears of the coming and kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ? And do we think the Church is different *now* from what she was *then* ? Such an opinion will be found to be based on a fatal delusion ; and all must remember that then the prudent and the wise of that generation listened to scoff, and heard only to reject. But the sweet harmonious sounds

proceeding, as it were, from a harp dropped from angelic hands, still stole upon the ear, and at last touched and melted the stony heart of man ; and now HE is esteemed unorthodox who doubts its truth : but it was not so *then*—its advocates were treated as brainless enthusiasts, and the few and scattered sheep, who thought they recognised in the message the voice of the good shepherd, were regarded as infatuated dupes ; and thus, we may be assured, it will be until THE TRUTH Himself shall appear.

But doctrine is only the shape which truth takes in the form of word. Doctrine, *per se*, is not a reality—it is but an accident of the truth, and not its essence. Doctrine is an auxiliary, and, as an auxiliary, can only have existence during the absence of its principal. When the Truth appears, doctrine, in the form of words, vanishes. The *manifestation* of the truth causes the darkness of error to disappear—as the one advances the other recedes ; so that doctrine will become useless when THE TRUTH Himself appears. There were doubts entertained of Christ's mission during its development, and denials of His Sonship with the Father when the claim was advanced ; but heresy, as touching His person only assumed a definite shape *after* He left the earth : and it is remarkable that this was almost the only

form which the heresies of the early Church took ; for Satan knew that to sow falsehood as to the person of Christ was sapping the foundations of the citadel itself : and it is, as we judge, because the Lord is Himself about to revisit the earth that that darkness which has been so prevalent for many centuries in the Church, respecting His Person and offices, has, to a certain extent, disappeared before the approaching light. We should not, therefore, be stumbled, if, immediately before the appearance of the TRUTH Himself, the Church's eyes were enlightened to a clear conception of the unfulfilled prophecies, as well as the manner of their accomplishment, since Christ is the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the ending of all things.

It may still be urged, and with much propriety, that the press is not the ordinary and legitimate channel for the communication of God's light to His Church ; and, consequently, that that light which reaches her by any other means than those ordinances which are instituted by the great Head of the Church, for this express purpose, ought to be received with unusual caution, if not altogether regarded with suspicion. We will not attempt to impugn the truth of the position, nor urge aught in defence of the present publication, as to *its* forming any exception to

the general rule ; but we will at once concede the point, and acknowledge that the duly appointed ordinances in the Church, represented in her various ministries, *are* the only ordinary and legitimate channels through which God communicates truth to His Church. But what does this admission involve ? What solemn lesson is taught us when God *does* pass by His own appointed means of instruction, and, it may be, teaches the Church by an unworthy hand ? The answer is too obvious to need suggestion, and too painful to encourage comment. It is a sign too plain to be mistaken, and the proof becomes damning just in proportion to the unworthiness of the agent ; for *such* significant tokens have ever preceded God's leaving His avowed servants to their own evil ways, and turning to another people.

Joshua stood and ministered before the Lord whilst clothed in filthy garments, though it was death to appear before Him otherwise arrayed than in the gorgeous habiliments of the priesthood ; nor can there exist any doubt but that one of the truths taught us in this vision of the prophet Zechariah is, that a man may be sustained in the presence of God, and do Him service, though, to the outward eye, he may appear to be arrayed in filthy garments. It was doubtless

comparatively an easy thing for the High Priest to minister before the Lord arrayed in the glorious attire of the priesthood, in outward conformity to the law, and, at the same time, the object of admiration to all; but it was *not* such an easy matter to stand before the God of all the earth, clothed in vile apparel, in direct violation of the law, and also an occasion of offence to the Jewish people; and if we do not greatly err in our interpretation of the future, God will yet defile the outward glory of the Church, and turn her external and comely raiment into filthy garments, to test whether she is sustained by the integrity of her faith, and stands from the consciousness of internal purity; or whether she rests upon external profession, and the approval of man. Hypocrisy is a far more subtle form of evil, and far more prevalent, than most men are disposed to admit; for this spiritual evil finds a home in the heart when least suspected, and its surest outward indication is an over-estimate of the letter of truth, too frequently concealing its violation in the spirit. Nor can we conceive a more direct mode of exposing, and thus destroying, such a subtle delusion, than by defiling the glory of every high and lofty pretension in the Church: and, when this comes to pass, it will be seen if the Church can walk by faith, and in

the Spirit, when divested of all her outward dependencies on sight—whether she can hang alone upon God, though she may be regarded by the world with derision and scorn. Let not any man think that some strange thing hath happened to him, when that fiery trial overtakes him which shall yet surely come upon all men, to try whether their faith is built upon the rock, or upon the sands ; neither let any man exult because he may hitherto have escaped the spiritual ordeal ; for he shall assuredly have to encounter it, except indeed he be a reprobate, and is sealed up in judicial blindness. In that day it shall be found that the integrity which the world and a worldly Church exacts and is satisfied with, will not stand before a heart-searching God, who weighs in His balances the motives as well as the actions of men ; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive : we speak as unto wise men, and he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

The duplex witnessing Church, in the days which are at hand, must stand before the God of all the earth, as Joshua, the high priest, in the vision, witnessing for Him, though clothed in a vile covering of sackcloth. Men, in the spiritual Church of Christ, must all be Joshuas in that day, and stand only in the power of the Spirit ; for he that walketh in the flesh shall of the flesh

reap corruption ; whilst he that walketh in the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Now, what is the sum of the whole matter ? We answer—that the Lord Jesus Christ is instantly about to be revealed to purify His Church from all her fleshly defilement—to lay low in the dust of the ground the lofty pretensions of all men, both in the Church and in the world—to exact an account of the stewardship of all—to separate the tares from the wheat—and to purify every man with whom is found any gold, or silver, or precious stones—to put every man in the fires of purification, in order that his dross may be burnt up, and the precious things alone remain. But ah ! who may endure the day of that trial, and who can stand when He appeareth who shall be revealed as the purifier of the sons of Levi !—and, if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the wicked appear ? They shall be burnt up as stubble, and trodden down as ashes, under the feet of the upright ; for this is the period spoken of by all the prophets as being at once the day of vengeance of our God, and the year of His redeemed ; for the government, both of the Church and the world, will be placed in the hands of the saints of the most high God, who will exercise the dominion and power for Christ over the whole earth, whilst He Him-

self is resident in the heavens ; and until He descends to this terraqueous globe to take the government of the nations upon His own shoulders. Tremble, ye proud and lofty among the sons of men !—tremble, ye who sit in high places, either in the Church or the world ! for He cometh who judgeth not after the sight of His eyes, nor reproveth after the hearing of His ears ; but judgeth the poor with righteousness, and reproveth with equity for the meek of the earth : for the Master of the house is at hand, to exact an account of the stewardship of every man, and to judge His people with equity : and it will prove to be a day of woe to you if ye have, by the fleshly exercise of your power, either quenched the life of God in His Church, or otherwise oppressed those over whom God hath given you the rule. The objects of sight are failing from the eye—the things which are, will soon fall from the selfish grasp of man, to give place to the spiritual and eternal realities of the world to come ; and blessed will that man *then* be who *now* walks as seeing things which are invisible ; but those who have a name to live, whilst they are dead at the root, will perish as in a moment before the bright gleam of His rays who shall speedily arise as the Sun of righteousness, to the joy of all who are upright in their hearts, but to the utter dismay

of those, both in the Church and the world, who have followed their own devices, and placed their trust upon any other foundation than the rock of ages.

And now, reader, what think ye? Say—have we spoken according to the oracles of God, or have we not? Have we stolen fire from the altar of God, and used it for unhallowed purposes? Have we approached thee, like Satan, clothed as an angel of light, covering falsehood and error with the garment of deceit? Have we sought to lower the standard of personal piety towards God, and love towards man? Have we spoken smooth things in thine ear, and flattered thy self-love? Have we been zealots, and advocated the cause of any particular section in the Catholic Church, to the rejection of all others? Have we deceitfully whispered the flattering lie in thine ear, that *thy* section of the body, and thine alone, compose the true spiritual temple of God? Have we pronounced any man's Shibboleth; or, on the contrary, have we written as to the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church? Say—have we been walking in light from sparks of our own kindling; or has our path been illuminated by that light which cometh down from above? Is it a light from heaven, or from hell? Canst thou not tell? If thine eye be single, thy

whole body shall be filled with light : but if thine eye be double, thy whole body shall be filled with doubt, uncertainty, and darkness. Be assured it is a light which will either dazzle and bewilder, or which will shed its heavenly rays upon thy path, and dispel the surrounding darkness. Ah ! surely it is a net laid for the feet of the unwatchful Church, in which she shall assuredly be snared and taken : for the proud and the lofty among men dig pits, into which they themselves fall ; and spread with their own hands the snare in which they shall be taken. But pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Humility surely cometh before honour ; and deep, heartbroken contrition before the consolations of the Spirit. But who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of his beloved, like a pillar of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant ? Who is that little sister who hath no breasts, and hitherto hath borne no spiritual children to perfection to Christ ; but who yet shall be as a wall, upon which a palace of silver shall yet be built ? Even the four cherubim, delivered at last out of the cold death of nature, and burning, though encompassed by a whirlwind, with the intense heat of the love of God. . Yea, the Church shall yet

be seen as the colour of amber, glowing with divine love. *Now*, if she hath any life, it is as a human heart, just torn from a living breast, and placed, whilst throbbing still with life, within a skeleton of iron ; but *then*, crushed in her spirit, and all her vain pride bowed down, she shall possess the heart of a man : for the cherubim have all the likeness of a man. But, ah ! the crushing ruin that will usher in that day ; the whirlwind and the storm ; the vain and lofty hopes laid low ; the high spiritual pretensions humbled in the dust of the earth ; presumptuous claims dashed in a moment to the ground ; the flattering unctions with which men have beguiled their souls, divested of their false odour, and leaving the spirit of man desolate and naked. Oh ! that day of heart-searching trial ; for who shall be able to stand when once He appeareth ? Weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth are at hand : bitterness and woe, lamentation and sorrow are near. But a brighter vision gleams in the distance ; and, when these calamities and trials shall have overpast, a day of eternal sunshine shall appear, reserved for all those who shall have passed through that great tribulation of the last days, and washed therein their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And ye few ! ye faithful few ! who have trampled

the world, in spirit, under your feet, and have no eyes or hearts for things which are seen, shade thy vision from the dazzling brightness of that crown, which even now hovers over thy brow, lest its transcendant splendour blind thee by its unearthly glare ! But soon the glories of the spiritual world shall burst upon thy sight, and mortality and corruption shall be swallowed up in life and victory. Soon shalt thou cast off thy vile raiment, and, like Joshua of old, be clothed with glorious apparel, and a crown of pure gold shall be set on thine head. Soon shalt thou be like the King in His beauty, for thou shalt see Him as He is, and be as in a moment transformed into His spotless image. Then shall it be seen that there is a reality in the spiritual world ; and that thrice blessed will that man be, who, NOT HAVING SEEN, yet believeth. EVEN SO, COME LORD JESUS : COME QUICKLY ! “ NEVER-THELESS, WHEN THE SON OF MAN COMETH, SHALL HE FIND FAITH ON THE EARTH ? ”

THE END.



CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

THE readers of the "Retrospect" are divisible into two classes—the one, those whom the author has wearied, and are, therefore, pleased with the termination of the work; and, the other, those whose attention has been sufficiently awakened as now to bid him farewell with regret. The writer has deemed it most judicious, however, to assume that *all* are of the former class; and, to prevent satiety, has now closed the publication of the work in its present form. There may possibly, however, be some few whose encouragement may ultimately produce a supplemental volume; but its future appearance will entirely depend upon the degree of support its publication may prospectively receive. And with this object in view, the author requests the favour of those of his readers who feel desirous of a continuance of the work (perhaps to the extent of three other numbers), will send his publisher their names, with the number of copies for which they are willing to subscribe.

The literary reader will need no intimation that the "Retrospect" is from the pen of an unlearned man ; and a life of no ordinary vicissitude has rendered it impossible that he should ever have been a studious one. But there is a Teacher who oftentimes condescends to teach the unlearned, and to lead the simple and the ignorant in paths which have proved as darkness to the wise and the prudent among men. Conventional forms and restrictions, which are too often accompanied by conventional prejudice—whether *in* the Church or *out* of the Church—sometimes present barriers to the acquisition of knowledge, where its pursuit may appear too extensively to violate established rules and dogmas; and this consideration alone may, perhaps, furnish an adequate reason wherefore discoveries, even in natural science, have often been produced through men who have not themselves been trammelled with the restrictions of the schools. David could not meet Goliath with the weight of Saul's armour ; and, though he essayed to go, he was obliged to divest himself of the heavy incumbrance before encountering his gigantic antagonist. The writer's weapon, like the boyish champion of old, has been but as a sling and a stone ; but, in the hands of God, the missile may yet be found to sink deep in the bold front of the Goliath of

the last days. But be that as it may, help there has been little; though some few have said—"The Lord be with thee." The work is now fairly before the Church, and the author has only to add that its merits are God's—its faults are all his own.

NOTICES OF REVIEWS, &c.

It has been suggested that, at the close of the present work, some notice should be taken of the different reviews which have appeared in the various periodicals of the day during the progress of its publication. We are no controvertialists, neither do we intend to enter upon the field of controversy: but, even if it were otherwise, the some twenty notices which have been professedly reviews of the work scarcely present one tangible point upon which we could exercise such a talent. Many of the reviewers have very judiciously and adroitly avoided the subject matter of the book, simply announcing to their readers, that such a publication was in existence; but that, though they had read certain numbers, the arguments advanced had failed to produce conviction upon their own minds. One reviewer, indeed, has taken elaborate pains to convince his readers of the writer's inconsistencies, as exhibited in the work itself; not with reference to the interpretations themselves, but rather the mode of handling them, and the unscholastic method of the argument. Upon which we would simply remark, that we consider the *matter* of a subject is of far more importance than the *manner* or *method* of the argument: and whilst we admit he has certainly made the most of the various points he has selected for animadversion, yet we think he has not been very happy in the selection itself. And though we have no reason

certainly to thank him for his indulgent consideration, we nevertheless feel indebted to him for exhibiting to our readers, as well as to ourselves, how few sterling objections could be urged against the work, when the disposition to advance them was too manifest to be mistaken. For mere ridicule we have no reply, and still less sympathy for satire and sarcasm : we are nevertheless perfectly conscious of the startling character of some of those interpretations which have appeared in the "Retrospect;" and as one of the most prominent has formed a subject of comment in some of the reviews, wherein the argument of the work has been alluded to, we would anxiously entreat the writers and readers of those reviews to reconsider, whether the objections against that interpretation be in truth well founded or not. We allude to the interpretation proposed of the septimo-octavo head of the beast—"the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

Now, the argument advanced against our interpretation—if argument it may be called—is, that it is too extraordinary to be true. Why, the interpretation being of an extraordinary character is one of the strongest *prima facie* arguments in its favor ; for, if any explanation of this apocalyptic enigma were proposed which was easy of apprehension, and exhibited, moreover, a perfect consistency with the ordinary experiences of nature, the presumption would be, that such an exposition must of necessity be erroneous, because not found in accordance with the prophecy itself ; which essentially consists in the inconceivable phenomenon of the reappearance of a being, "who was, and is not, and yet is." We do not contend, *because* our interpretation is wonderful and extraordinary, that *therefore* it is true ; but we do maintain that the fact of its being so is no argument against

its truth, but rather the reverse. Nor must it be forgotten, that it is expressly stated in clear and distinct terms, in the prophecy itself, that it is the reappearance into life of the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, which *occasions* the wonder of the world: and furthermore, that, by the universal consent of all commentators, the infidel Antichrist of the last days will prove to be a spiritual person; and, as such, the exact, though antagonistic, counterpart of him who is the wonderful one.

It is really very marvellous to perceive the shrinkings of the human heart in respect to the spiritual, supernatural, realities of the age to come. Men must certainly attach very vague and indefinite notions to the spiritual and supernatural, as though these terms contemplated a condition of existence having no relation whatever to time, circumstance, or place: whereas the truth is, that every created being, whether natural or supernatural—visible or invisible—cannot have reference to any condition out of either, since the powers of every created being are of necessity limited in their operation. We suspect, therefore, that the difficulty of apprehending the re-existence of a man, to re-act another career upon the stage of this world, is rather attributable to man's inaptitude to apprehend future spiritual things, as substantial realities, than to any well-grounded objection that such a notion is inconsistent with divine revelation, or otherwise incongruous with the existence of spiritual beings; and we submit that the more legitimate mode of argument, in opposition to our interpretation, would be an endeavour to prove that that interpretation was contrary to both. But we must now take leave of both reviews and reviewers; and which we do, by beseeching them all to weigh our arguments rather than criticise

our manner of advancing them ; and carefully to regard the grave propositions we have propounded, for the consideration of the Church, rather than the agent through whom they have come ; for such objections, if they are made to be causes of offence and stumbling, will, in the end, prove to be very insufficient reasons for the rejection of any truth, which is otherwise susceptible of no well grounded objection.

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